

vagueness versus ambiguity

A lot of the time, people use the terms ‘vague’ and ‘ambiguous’ interchangeably. But the two concepts are different.

- A term is vague if it has one possible meaning, but this meaning is hazy or fuzzy or indefinite.
 - examples: ‘bald’, ‘strong’, ‘successful’, ‘a little’
- A term is ambiguous if it has more than one possible meaning—though each of the two or more possible meanings may be perfectly clear and precise.
 - example of semantic ambiguity: ‘bank’
 - ex. of syntactic ambiguity: ‘ate the cheese in the fridge’