VAGUE LANGUAGE IN TRANSLATION

Overview of Vague Language

In 1965, the American cybernetics expert Zadeh first proposed the famous theory of vague language — a new type of scientific thinking. From then on, many scholars focus their studies on the ambiguity of language.

Origin of Vague Language

The basic requirements of traditional linguistics language were clearness and accurateness. However, the uncertainty of the boundary of an objective entity, people’s different perspectives, and lack of comprehensive understanding has resulted in the inconsistency of language, so vague language becomes an inevitable existence.

For a long time, vague language has been overlooked. Until in 1965, the American cybernetics expert Zadeh was the first to develop the famous Fuzzy Set Theory. The publication of his *Fuzzy Sets in Information and Control* in 1965 marks the birth of the fuzzy set theory.

A lot of disciplines mushroom thereupon—fuzzy mathematics, fuzzy logic, fuzzy psychology and fuzzy linguistics, etc. Linguists did lots of experiments and studies upon the fuzzy set theory. Zadeh and his followers have developed fuzzy set theory in some detail. Zadeh created a new type of scientific thinking — vague language.
Zadeh held that “Ambiguity is not involved in a point, but in the uncertainty of a set, it is a process of gradation from belonging to to not belonging to.” Max Black said: “the ambiguity of words is shown in that it has a limited area of application. But the boundaries of the area are not clear.” (Black, 1949:31)

Lakoff defines the hedges, an important part of vague language, as “the vague words which make things confused”. Hedges are the most common and typical words used in vague language. These definitions of ambiguity were different because of the different points of view. But anyway, people have a general idea and understanding of vague language through these definitions.