Discussion questions for ‘Introduction: Thinking about language and Wisconsin English’

1. What are dialect, accent, brogue, lilt and slang? (Quick definitions are enough.) Which ones do linguists use and not use? Are there other terms you know for kinds of language that might be useful?
2. How do geographical patterns and boundaries correlate or not correlate with language? Come up with one possible example beyond those given in the text.
3. Do you say Don ~ Dawn, rot ~ wrought, not ~ naught, sot ~ sought and even cot ~ caught the same? Ask at least three other people to say those words (from a written sheet of paper) and see if they say them the same or different.
4. Do you pronounce hiss and his and bus and buzz the same or different?
5. On pp. 8-9, we describe some regional vowels changes in Wisconsin. Whether you’re from here or not, do you think you have this pattern?
6. Are there verb forms (like those discussed) that you have non-standard forms of? Which ones?
7. What’s your reaction to these words/forms discussed in the chapter:
   a. warsh for wash
   b. anymore gas is expensive
   c. bag pronounced like beg (more or less)
   d. bagel pronounced with the vowel in cat
   e. We’re leaving. Are you coming with?
   f. Hey, come here once!
   g. He didn’t do nothing.
   h. The car needs washed.