Chapter 8

Lexical and Morphosyntactic Items

8.1 Introduction

Chapters 6 and 7 presented the present-day phonological evidence for considering Erie to be part of the Midland dialect region. This section will continue along those lines and consider the evidence from a few lexical and morphosyntactic variables. As was shown in Section 2.2, the lexical evidence from the earlier dialect atlases LAMSAS and DARE, representing the state of the language in the early 20th century, overwhelmingly supports grouping Erie with the North at that point in time. Unfortunately, most of the lexical items used in those earlier surveys have become obsolete, so it is not possible to conduct a controlled study based on the same words to determine how the boundaries have changed.

Despite the fact that lexical and morphosyntactic variables are not closely tied together as part of a larger structural system, as is the case for phonological variables, the evidence from LAMSAS and DARE shows that the regions defined by lexical isoglosses correspond well to the regions defined by phonological ones in ANAE. Figure 11.16 in ANAE (Labov et al. 2006:150) compares the regions based on phonological isoglosses to the regions defined in Map 8.1 in (Carver 1987:248). There is a close correspondance between Carver's

Upper North and ANAE's North, as well as Carver's Lower North and ANAE's Midland. Furthermore, Carver's boundary between the Lower North and the Upper South corresponds well with ANAE's boundary between the Midland and the South. Additionally, the regions defined in Figure 3 of Kurath (1949) correspond pretty well to the regions in ANAE, especially the division between the North and the Midland. Figure 14.11 in ANAE (Labov et al. 2006:207) emphasizes the close agreement between the lexical boundary between the North and the Midland from Carver (1987) and the phonological boundary. The only city which is to the north of the lexical boundary but is not within the phonological boundary of the North is Erie.

This section will present evidence from two lexical variables (stress assignment in the word *elementary* and the phrase *redd up*) and two morphosyntactic variables (positive *anymore* and *need* + Past Participle). This evidence will also show that Erie speakers fall on the Midland side of the boundaries; thus, the present-day lexical and morphosyntactic evidence from Erie is not as mis-aligned with the phonological evidence as is the case in ANAE Figure 14.11.

8.2 *Elementary*

An initial piece of non-phonological evidence comes from the lexical item *elementary*. Speakers in Upstate New York generally place secondary stress on the penultimate syllable of this word, whereas speakers in Erie, and the neighboring areas in western Pennsylvania pronounce *elementary* with an unstressed penultimate syllable (this is the normal pronunciation of this word throuht the rest of North America, too). The Upstate New York pattern appears to be unique to the region, at least in North America, and is also quite homogenous throughout most of the state (Dinkin 2009). The distribution of stress in *elementary* thus shows a clear boundary between Erie and the Midland, on the one side, and

Code	Stress pattern	Transcription
0	penultimate vowel deleted	[ˌɛləˈmɛntri]
1	penultimate vowel unstressed	[ˌɛləˈmɛntəri], [ˌɛləˈmɛntr̩i]
2	unsure or intermediate	e.g., [ˌɛləˈmɛnˌtəri]
3	penultimate vowel bears secondary stress	[ˌɛləˈmɛnˌtɛri]
4	penultimate vowel bears secondary stress; antepenultimate unstressed and reduced to schwa	[ˈɛləmənˌtɛri]

Table 8.2: Coding scheme used for lexical stress in *elementary*

Upstate New York, on the other.

The Upstate New York pronunciation of *elementary* has the following stress pattern: [ˌɛləˈmɛnˌtɛri]. This contrasts with the regular pronunciation in the rest of North America with an unstressed penultimate syllable, leading to pronunciations with either a schwa or a syllabic /r/ in the penultimate syllable, as in [ˌɛləˈmɛntəri] and [ˌɛləˈmɛntr̩i], or, most commonly, complete deletion of the syllable, as in [ˌɛləˈmɛntri]. Dinkin (2009) shows that the same stress pattern also affects other lexical items ending in *-mentary* in Upstate New York, thus leading to pronunciations such as [ˌsɛdəˈmɛnˌtɛri] for *sedimentary* and [ˌdakjəˈmɛnˌtɛri]. However, this study will only present results for *elementary*, since that was the only *-mentary* word included in the word list.[1]

Each speaker's word list pronunciation of *elementary* was provided with one of five codes representing the degree of stress on the penultimate syllable. The coding scheme, along with examples for each code, is presented in Table 8.2.

Figure 8.2 presents the results for the geographical distribution of the Upstate New York pattern of secondary stress in *elementary*. For this map, codes 0 and 1 were treated as qualitatively identical, since they both have an unstressed penultimate syllable. These

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[1]The item *documentary* was added to a later version of the word list, but not enough speakers read this version for an analysis to be conducted.

codes were merged and are shown as red dots in Figure 8.2. Additionally, codes 3 and 4 were treated as identical, since both show secondary stress on the penultimate syllable. These codes, representing the Upstate New York pattern, were merged in Figure 8.2 as blue dots. (No pronunciations in my data set received a code of 2.)

Figure 8.2 shows that Erie clearly exhibits the normal widespread pronunciation lacking stress on the penultimate syllable—not a single speaker in Erie pronounced *elementary* with secondary stress on the penultimate syllable. On the other hand, the general Upstate New York pattern is robustly attested in Chautauqua County, NY. There, 18 out of 21 speakers produced tokens with secondary stress on the penultimate syllable.

The isogloss between the two regions appears to coincide closely with the state boundary. The only two speakers in Pennsylvania who exhibited the Upstate New York stress pattern live in Wattsburg and Union City, both located in Erie County just to the southwest of the border with New York. Interestingly, both of these speakers are older women: the speaker from Union City is 77, and the one from Wattsburg is 80. If younger speakers in Wattsburgh and Union City are found to have the normal unstressed pattern, then this could potentially indicate a change in progress away from the Upstate New York pattern.

According to the terminology in Chambers and Trudgill (1999:97), this boundary should not actually be referred to as a lexical isogloss, but rather a pronunciation isogloss. As they explain: "the former involves a difference in formatives from one dialect to the other while the latter involves a contrast in the phonemic representation of the same formative." An example of a lexical isogloss according to this terminology would be a boundary between the use of the terms *elementary school* and *grammar school*. However, I will continue to use the terminology *lexical variable* and *lexical isogloss* when referring to lexical stress assignment in *elementary* to distinguish this phenomenon from the phonological variables discussed in Chapter 6 and 7 that have deeper structural connections to other phenomena.

Chambers and Trudgill (1999:99) do say that lexical and pronunciation isoglosses are
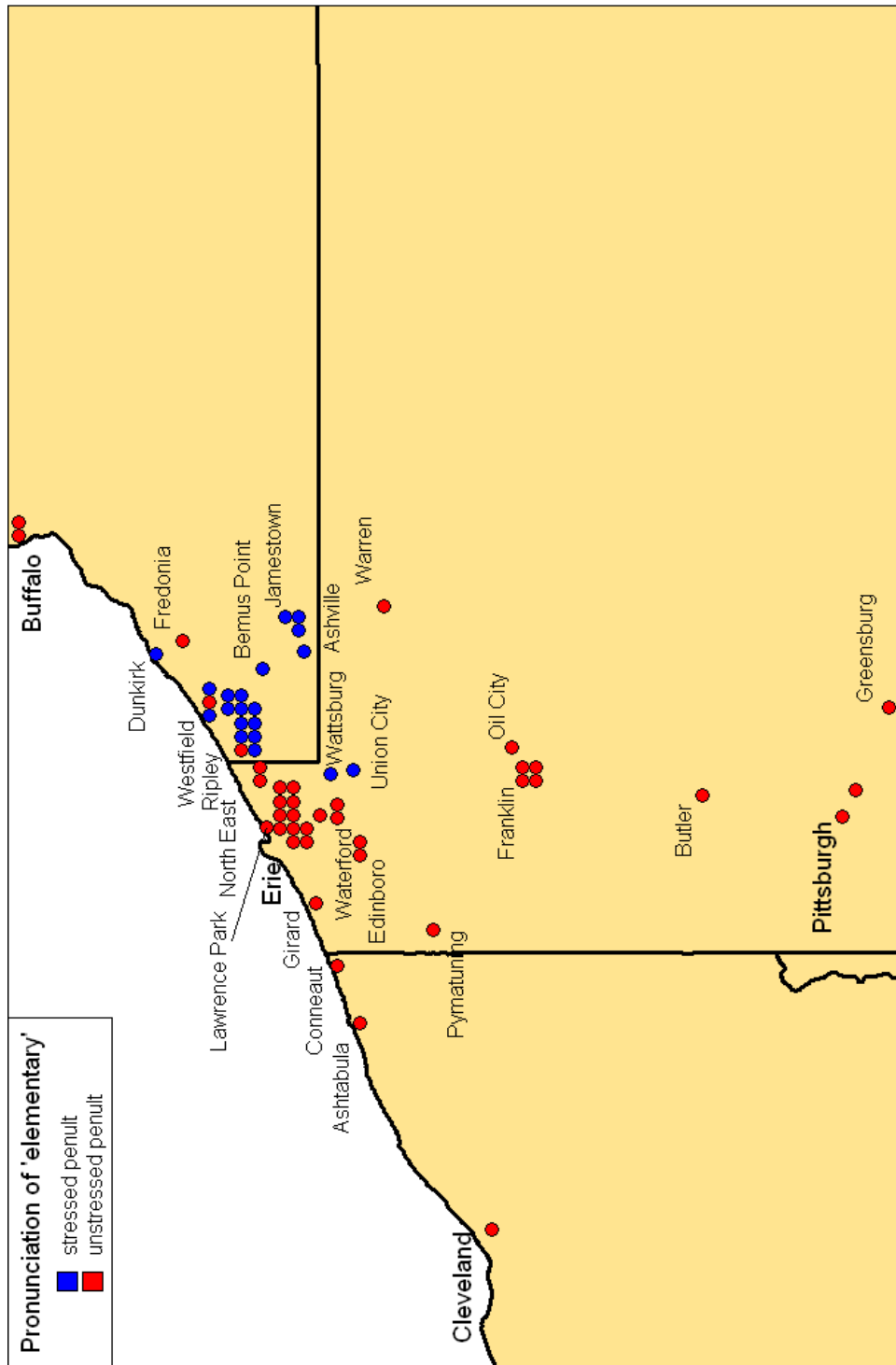
Figure 8.2: Lexical stress in *elementary*

quite similar from a structural standpoint, and group them together under the "lexical" heading when discussing the structural significance of different types of isoglosses. They also hypothesize that pronunciation variables are less likely than lexical variables to rise to the level of conscious awareness. Interestingly, evidence from one speaker that I interviewed shows that the stress variation in *elementary* is noticeable. This speaker grew up in Cleveland, OH, but currently resides in Findley Lake, NY (about halfway betwen Wattsburg and Ashville in Figure 8.2). This town is located in Chautauqua Co., about 15 miles east of the border with Erie Co., PA. As I was telling her about the purpose of my interviews and we began talking about regional pronunciation variation, the first thing she said was "Everyone around here says elementary (pronounced as [ˌɛləˈmɛnˌtɛri]), but I say elementary (pronounced as [ˌɛləˈmɛntri])." At this point she had not seen the word list, and we had not previously discussed this variable at all. This shows that the Upstate New York stress pattern is clearly salient to speakers from other dialect regions.

8.3   *Redd up*

Another lexical item that shows a division between the Erie area and Chautauqua Co., NY is the verb *redd*, normally used in combination with the preposition *up* to form the phrasal verb *redd up*. Carver (1987:265) glosses *redd (up)* as "to clean or straighten (a room); to clean or clear off (a dinner table)". My impression from eliciting judgments about *redd up* is that it is generally used to refer to a quick tidying up of a specific area, not a longer or more general cleaning. To illustrate this sense, one speaker from Erie said "Redd up is what you do to the room before guests come over."

Published sources show that southwestern Pennsylvania is the area that exhibits the most concentrated use of *redd up*. McCool (1982:29) lists it as one of the features of Pittsburghese. Gooden and Eberhardt (2007:91–92) also cite *redd up* as a feature of Pitts-

burgh speech, but show that it use is restricted to White speech, as opposed to AAE. DARE describes its usage as "scattered, but chiefly North Midland, especially Pennsylvania" (Cassidy and Hall 2002:511): of the 97 DARE communities where "redd up" was attested in the questionnaire, 36 are located in Pennsylvania. Carver (1987:194) uses this distribution as the basis for including *redd up* as one of the 53 DARE isoglosses that comprise his Lower North (i.e., North Midland) layer.

Based on its geographical distribution in North America, it is quite likely that the use of *redd up* originated with Scots-Irish settlers (Montgomery 1997). However, it is difficult to demonstrate this direct path of transmission conclusively; since *redd up* also occurs in Scotland and northern dialects in England, its spread to North America could have been facilitated by other groups of immigrants using it as well (Crozier 1984:311). However, the fact that its isogloss seems to coincide well with the area of Scots-Irish settlement, and that speakers from other regions generally do not recognize it, strongly suggests that it was indeed brought over by Scots-Irish immigrants.

My own fieldwork in northwestern Pennsylvania and western New York show that the meaning of *redd up* is recognized by many speakers as far north as Erie. Also, several speakers from that region report that they themselves could use the phrase. On the other hand, only one speaker from Chautauqua Co., NY reported that she could use *redd up*, and only two others said they thought that they've heard other people use it. Most of them did not recognize the phrase and could only guess at what they thought it might mean. This geographic distribution is shown in Figure 8.3.

The distribution for *redd up* shown in Figure 8.3 corresponds well with the map for this item in DARE. In that map, Meadville (Crawford Co.) and Union City (Erie Co.) in Pennsylvania were both listed as communities where *redd up* was attested in the questionnaire (although it was not attested in North East, Erie Co.), whereas none of the communities in Chautauqua Co., NY were. This suggests that the current acceptability of *redd up* as far
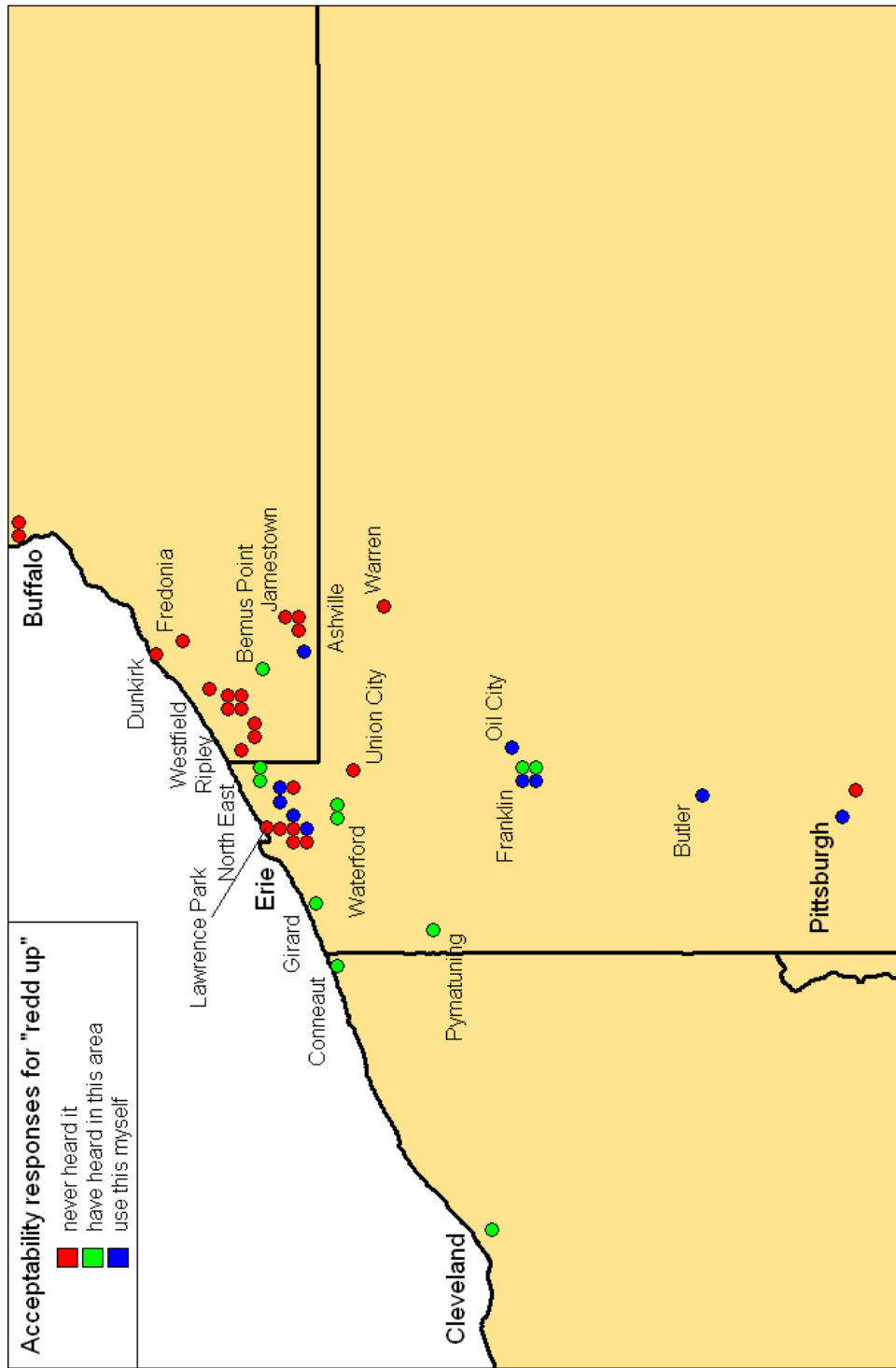
Figure 8.3: Acceptability responses for the sentence *I really should redd up the living room.*

north as Erie is a relatively old phenomenon, dating back to at least the early part of the 20th century, and is not necessarily due to recent influence from the Pittsburgh area. This could be one indication that the original linguistic situation in Erie was not identical to the neighboring Northern region, despite the evidence presented in Section 2.2. The presence of a substantial proportion of original Scots-Irish settlers in Erie (see Chapter 9) provides a possible explanation for this apparent contradiction.

8.4   Positive *anymore*

The use of *anymore* without an accompanying negative or question marker is widespread throughout the United States, and is a feature of most of the Midland region. Precise isoglosses for its geographic distribution throughout the country have not been determined, however, despite numerous studies. Two factors contribute to the lack of precision in our knowledge of the extent of its use. First of all, positive *anymore* is relatively infrequent in normal speech. Thus, targeted formal methods are required to elicit judgments about its use. However, introspective judgments about positive *anymore* have been consistently shown to disagree with actual usage (Labov 1973). Thus, any data obtained about positive *anymore* must be treated with caution.

Individual studies have shown positive *anymore* to be in common use in specific areas of the Midland, such as Missouri (Youmans 1986) and Southeastern Pennsylvania (Shields 1997), etc. Furthermore, three surveys with a larger geographic compass have investigated positive *anymore*, and their results show that its area of acceptance overlaps considerably with the Midland. Dunlap (1945) shows that positive *anymore* is most prevalent among his informants from Southeastern Pennsylvania and the neighboring areas of Delaware and Maryland, but is also widely attested in southern Illinois and Indiana. The isogloss in Labov et al. (2006:294) extends as far east as Philadelphia and as far west as Idaho, but

stays south of the North / Midland boundary. The evidence from DARE (Cassidy and Hall 1985:73) also shows that positive *anymore* is concentrated most heavily in the Midland, showing especially high rates of use in Kentucky, Indiana, and West Virginia.

The fact that the use of positive *anymore* is strongest in the Midland corresponds well with the theory that it, too, originated in the speech of Scots-Irish immigrants (Dunlap 1945, Crozier 1984, Montgomery 2004). A Scots-Irish origin would also help to explain why positive *anymore* appears to be stronger in the South Midland, and does not extend as far north as the boundary between the North and the Midland in ANAE.

8.4.1 Examples from conversational speech

Since positive *anymore* is relatively infrequent in natural discourse, it is not possible to conduct a quantitative analysis of the occurences from the interviews I conducted. However, the small number of examples that did occur in the interviews provide clear evidence for the existence of positive *anymore* as a feature of Erie speech.

In total, I observed nine examples of positive *anymore* being used in natural discourse during my fieldwork. These nine examples came from six different speakers, all natives to the city of Erie. Examples 8.1 – 8.9 show these nine examples, demographic information about the speakers who produced them is presented in Table 8.3.

(8.1) That's the world's excuse to do anything anymore.

(8.2) A: It's amazing how much equipment kids need.
       B: Oh, *anymore*.

(8.3) The way they strap these toys in anymore.

(8.4) I'm sure you've probably gone to a GNC or a health foods store or even a grocery store anymore and I mean it's crazy looking at all that stuff.

(8.5) It's so hard the way we build things anymore.

(8.6) I'm afraid to buy jewelry for her anymore.

Examples produced	Age	Gender	Town
8.1, 8.2	53	m	Erie
8.3	33	f	Erie
8.4	66	f	Erie
8.5	53	f	Erie
8.6	60	f	Erie
8.7, 8.8, 8.9	56	f	Erie

Table 8.3: Demographic information for the six speakers who produced positive *anymore*

(8.7) Any little town I go to anymore has a local espresso place.

(8.8) I don't know how long they take to score these things anymore. (about the SAT tests)

(8.9) Most of the planes I take seem fuller than that anymore.

The positive evidence exhibited by the nine naturally occurring examples of positive *anymore* produced by Erieites is a clear indication that positive *anymore* is a widely accepted feature of Erie speech. On the other hand, the negative evidence from other areas—i.e., the lack of examples of positive *anymore*—does not necessarily indiacte that positive *anymore* is not a feature of the speech of these regions, due to the construction's rarity in discourse.

8.4.2   Acceptability judgments for positive *anymore*

It is suggestive that the six speakers who spontaneously produced positive *anymore* all come from Erie, and that none of the speakers from Chautauqua Co., NY did so. However, in order to investigate the status of positive *anymore* in more geographic detail, it is necessary to obtain more data than just naturally occurring examples of the construction. In order to do this, speakers' judgments about the construction were elicited during the reading passage section of the interview. This survey used the methodology employed by

ANAE (Labov et al. 2006:293) for positive *anymore*, namely, a three-point forced choice scale. The speakers were presented with the following three sentences:

(8.10) Ticket prices are so high anymore, I never go to the movie theater.

(8.11) Anymore, there's too much crime in this neighborhood.

(8.12) John eats fast food so much anymore, it's no wonder that he's becoming overweight.

They were asked to rate the sentences as either 1) "I could say a sentence like this." 2) "I wouldn't say this, but I've heard people around here say something like it." or 3) "I've never heard anything like this before—it sounds like bad English." Examples 8.10 and 8.11 express complaints, which Labov et al. (2006:293) have argued to be the most natural pragmatic context for positive *anymore*. Example 8.11 has preposed positive *anymore*, which is generally judged to be less acceptable. As a control case, the survey also included the sentence in Example 8.13. This sentence contains *anymore* in a negative context, and should be judged to be perfectly natural by all speakers.[2]

(8.13) I was a pitcher when I was young, but now I don't play baseball anymore.

Table 8.4 shows the mean response values for all 49 speakers who took the survey. First of all, the mean response for the control sentence was 1.2, indicating that nearly all speakers judged this sentence to be perfectly acceptable, as was expected. The overall results for the three positive *anymore* sentences confirm that pre-posed *anymore* is less acceptable, and that framing the construction in a complaint speech act makes it more acceptable. The sentence with pre-posed *anymore*, Example 8.11, received the lowest overall response. Among the other two sentences with non pre-posed *anymore*, the one expressing a complaint, Example 8.10, received a higher overall response. However, the overall responses

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[2]One informant did provide a rating of 3 for Example 8.13. This speaker, in fact, provided a rating of 3 for all of the eight sentences in the acceptability judgment portion of the survey. His responses to this portion of the survey were deemed unreliable and discarded.

	Example 8.10	Example 8.11	Example 8.12	Example 8.13
Mean acceptability response	1.9	2.2	2.1	1.2

Table 8.4: Mean response values (on a scale of 1 – 3) for acceptability judgments on three positive *anymore* sentences (Examples 8.10 – 8.12) and one control sentence (Example 8.13)

are all quite close, indicating that these effects are not very strong relative to the overall effect of the presence of positive *anymore*.

Figures 8.5 through 8.7 display the geographical locastions of the responses to the three sentences with positive *anymore*. Several Erieites responded that these sentences were something that they could say or that they have heard people around them saying. Taken along with the attested examples from Erieites of positive *anymore* in conversational speech presented in Section 8.4.1 this provides further evidence that Erie patterns with the Midland with regard to this feature.

It is not possible, however, to draw isoglosses in Figures 8.5 through 8.7 between an area where positive *anymore* is clearly acceptable and an area where it is not. The figures show that several speakers from Chautauqua County, NY also judged these three sentences as acceptable. Furthermore, the speaker from Butler, PA, judged two of them to be unacceptable. Butler is located just 40 miles north of Pittsburgh, and, based on previous studies, would thus be expected to have widespread acceptability of positive *anymore*. These results thus must be interpreted somewhat cautiously, and it must be remembered that speakers of positive *anymore* often do not have accurate introspective judgments on their own usage of the construction (Labov 1973).
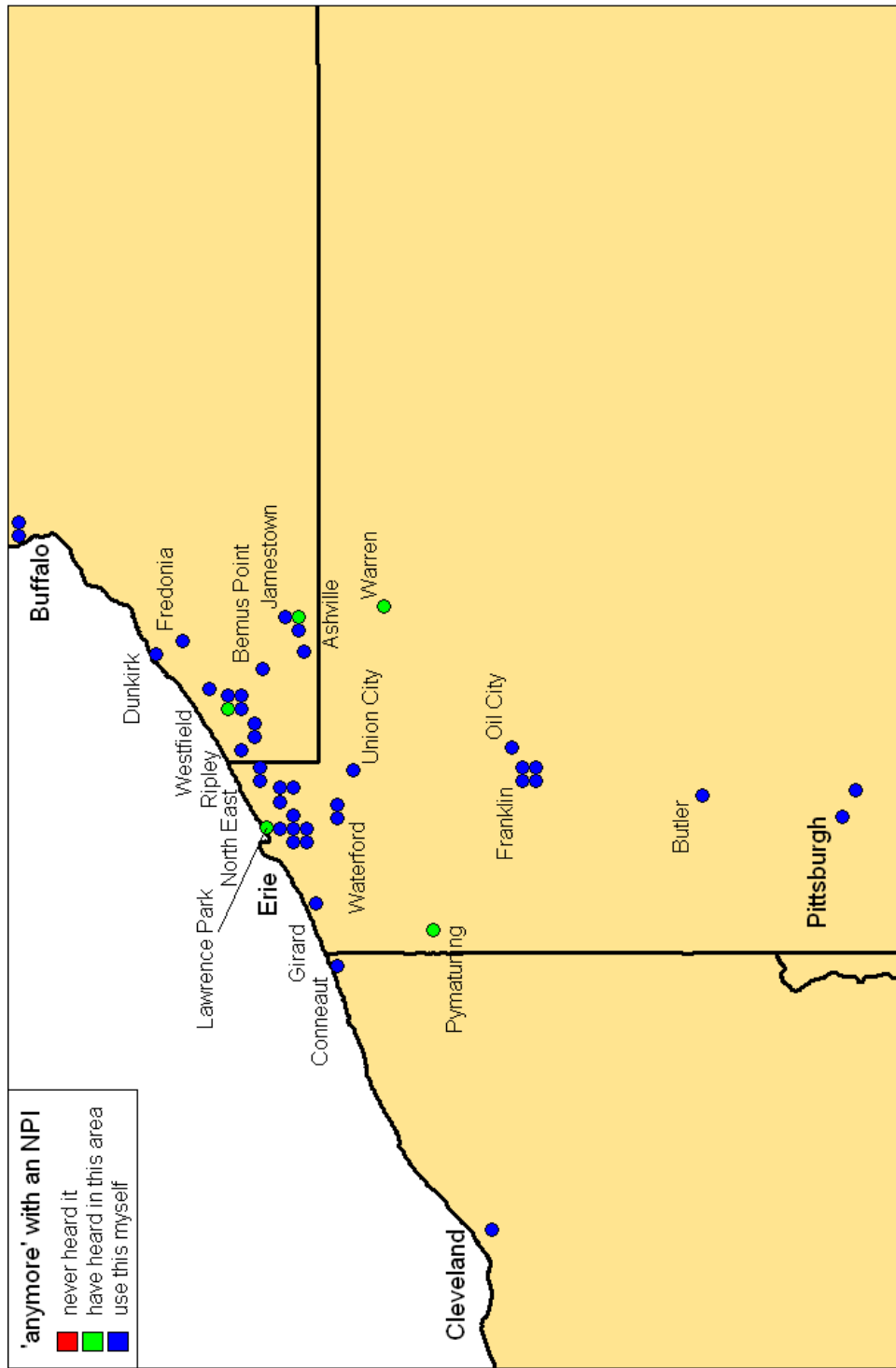
Figure 8.4: Acceptability responses for the sentence *I was a pitcher when I was young, but now I don't play baseball anymore.*
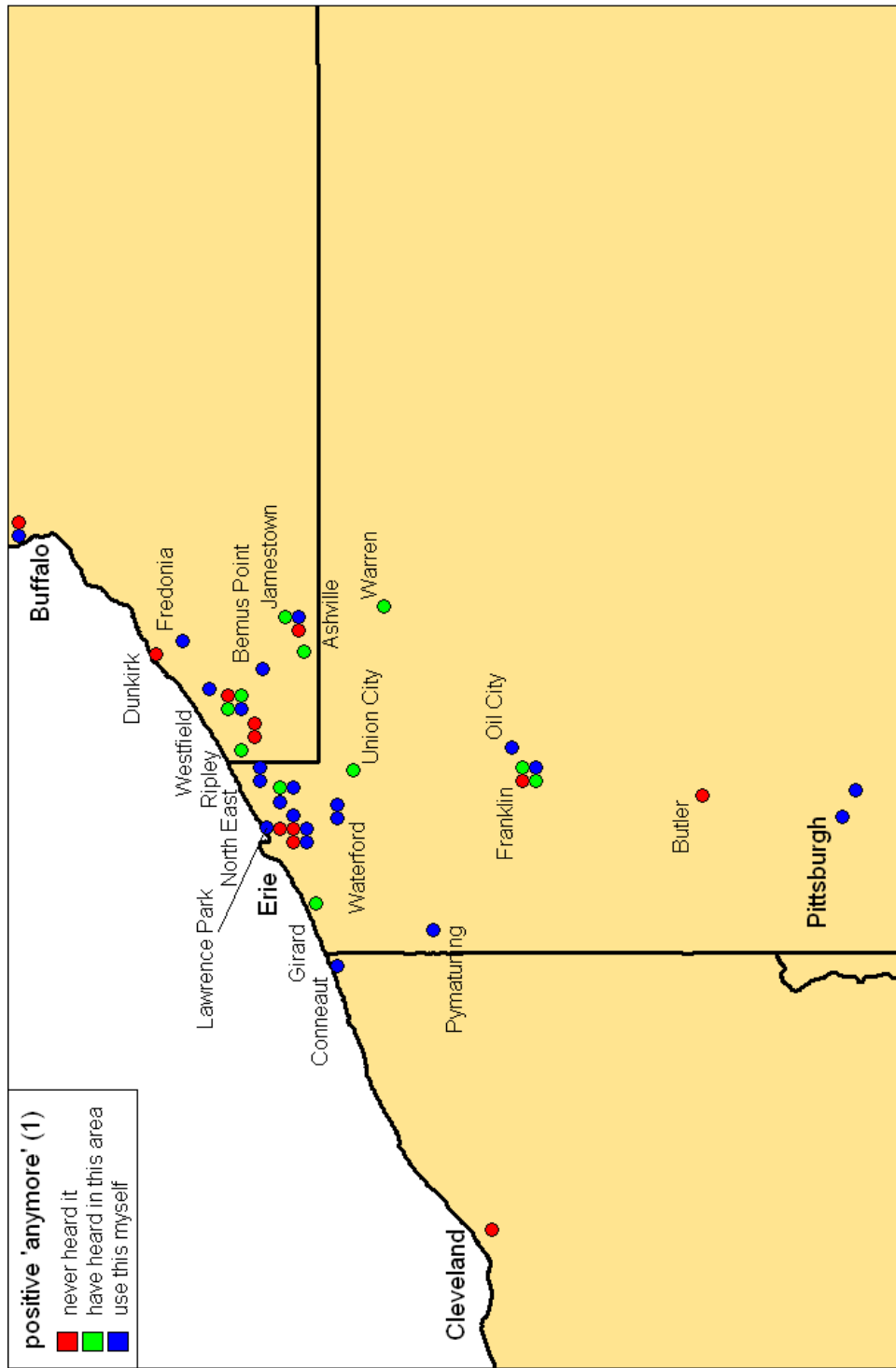
Figure 8.5: Acceptability responses for the sentence *Ticket prices are so high anymore, I never go to the movie theater.*
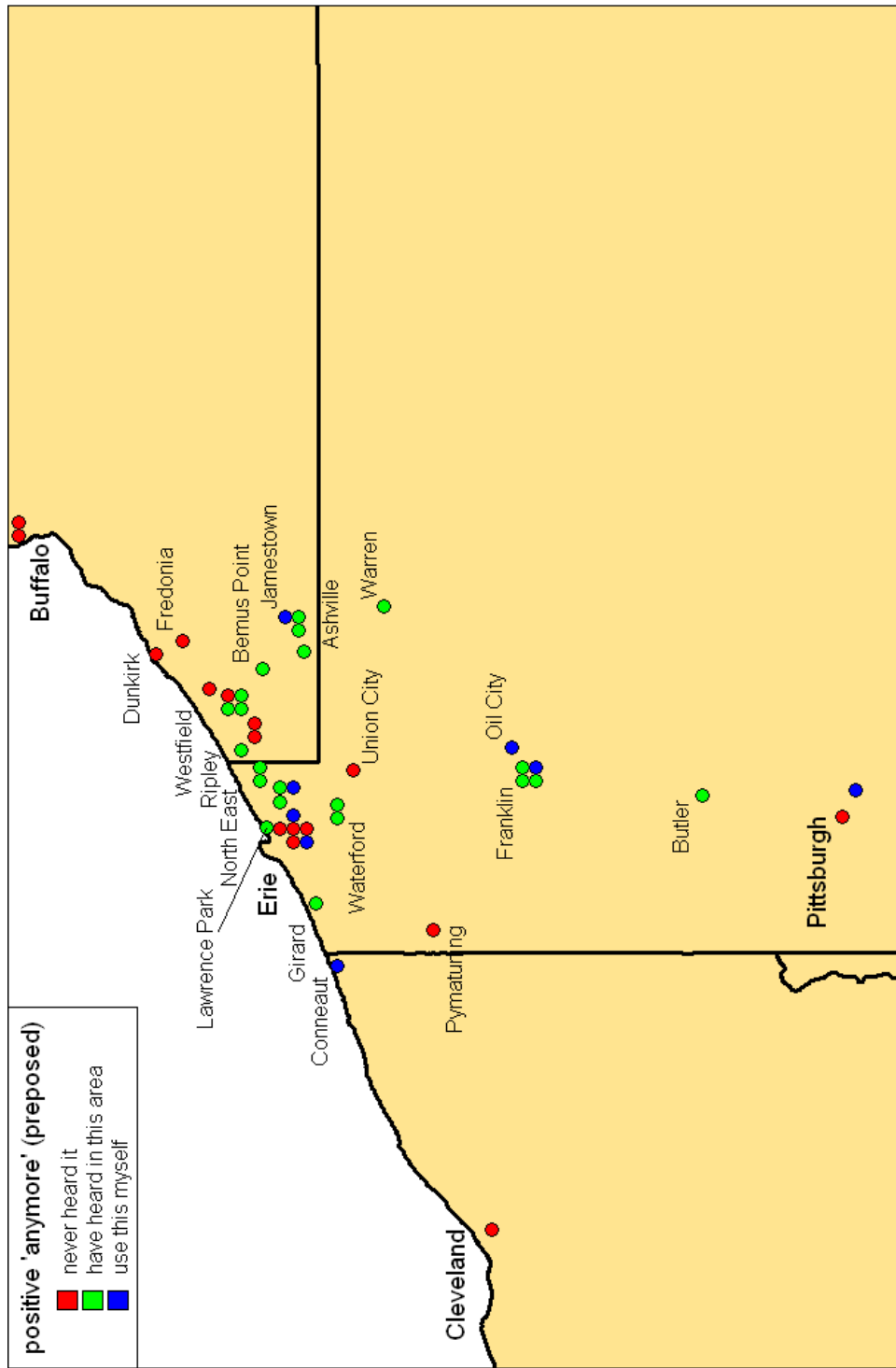
Figure 8.6: Acceptability responses for the sentence *Anymore, there's too much crime in this neighborhood.*
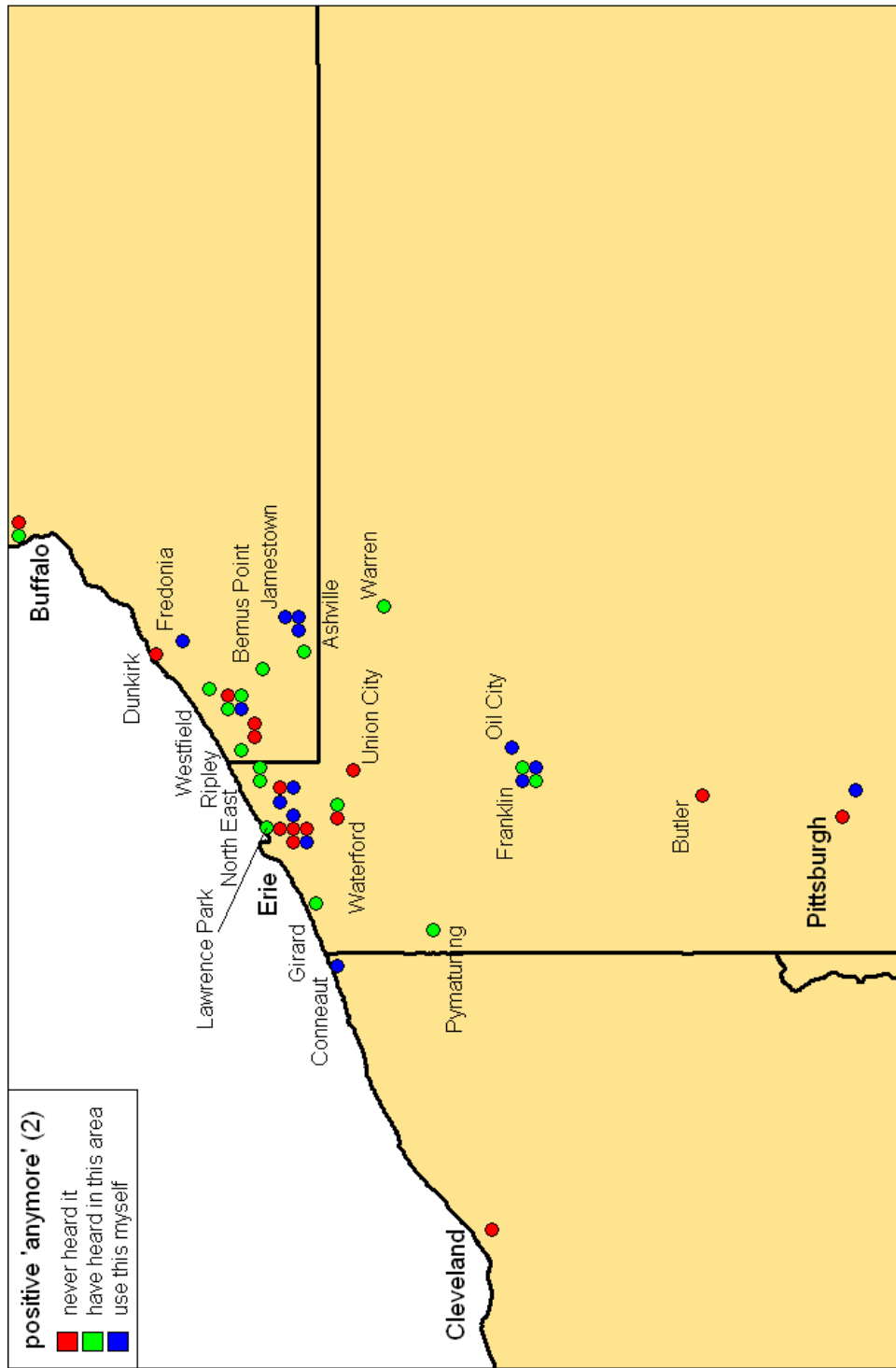
Figure 8.7: Acceptability reponses for the sentence *John eats fast food so much anymore, it's no wonder that he's becoming overweight.*

8.4.3 Discussion

There are two possible explanations for the current acceptability of positive *anymore* in and around the city of Erie. On the one hand, it could reflect a northward spread of the Midland system, and, thus, influence of Pittsburgh and the neighboring areas of Western Pennsylvania. On the other hand, it could be the case that positive *anymore* has always been a feature of Erie speech. The only potential negative evidence for the earlier existence of positive *anymore* in Erie is a single informant from the survey in Dunlap (1945) who marked the construction as "unfamiliar". However, a DARE informant from Union City in Erie County did use *anymore* in response to the elicitation prompt: *People used to walk a lot, but everybody drives a car _____ .* This positive attestation near Erie suggests that positive *anymore* is probably not a recent addition to the area. As was the case with *redd up*, the acceptability of positive *anymore* in the Erie area may be attributable to the early presence of Scots-Irish settlers in the region.

8.5 *need* + Past Participle

A second Midland grammatical feature that is also attested in the Erie area is the use of *need* + Past Participle (V-*en*), as in *The car needs washed*. This use contrasts with the use of *need* + Present Participle (V-*ing*) in other dialect regions, as in *The car needs washing*. The full version containing *need to be* + Past Participle, as in *The car needs to be washed*, is acceptable in all areas.

The earliest source that mentions the geographic distribution of this feature is Stabley (1959) who reports attestations for *need* + V-*en* in several towns in western Pennsylvania: "Many western Pennsylvanians—educated as well as uneducated—often declare that the house *needs painted* or the television set *needs fixed* or the children *need spanked*. Certain radio and television announcers from Indiana, Johnstown, and Pittsburgh employ this

construction, as do some newspaper writers and ministers...As an eastern Pennsylvanian, I have met this usage only in the Allegheny Mountain region of the state; wide inquiries yield no evidence of its currency elsewhere in the land." This quote is instructive, since it mentions both the fact that the use of *need* + V-*en* is not restricted by the speaker's social class, and the fact that it is not affected heavily by stylistic variation, since it is attested in printed sources. These two characteristics of *need* + V-*en* are reported as well in larger, more recent studies (Murray et al. 1996). However, the assertion that *need* + V-*en* is restricted solely to western Pennsylvania has been contradicted by more recent research. DARE's entry for the construction says that it is "chiefly Midland, especially Pennsylvania". Murray et al. (1996) demonstrate that its use is widespread throughout most of the Midland and limited in other regions. ANAE also shows that the geographical range of *need* + V-*en* coincides well with the Midland region, although its range is somewhat smaller than that of positive *anymore*—the isogloss of the former is almost wholly surrounded by the isogloss of the latter (Labov et al. 2006:295). Of the two ANAE speakers from Erie, one reported that she herself uses *need* + V-*en*, and the other reported hearing people in the area use it.

As is the case for positive *anymore* (Labov 1972:309), the alternation between *need* + V-*en* and *need* + V-*ing* operates below the level of consciousness for most speakers (Murray et al. 1996), and can thus be appropriately studied with a written questionnaire. In order to track the northern extent of the use of *need* + V-*en*, a forced-choice sentence completion task between *need* + V-*en* and *need* + V-*ing* was included in the written portion of my survey. The two sentences are reproduced as Examples 8.14 and 8.15:

(8.14) I drove through a big, muddy puddle yesterday. Now my car needs   washed.
             washing.

(8.15) I haven't cleaned my kitchen in weeks. The floor really needs   mopped.
             mopping.

By using a forced-choice task instead of a sentence completion task, I was trying to maximize the percentage of relevant responses. Also, by not including an option for the construction *need to be* + V-*en*, the informant is forced to provide a response that unambiguously indicates whether or not they can use *need* + V-*en* This assumes, of course, that one, and only one, of the two constructions *need* + V-*en* and *need* + V-*ing* is grammatical for any given speaker. A few speakers did in fact respond that they did not like either of the two choices for completing Examples 8.14 and 8.15 and instead wrote in *needs to be washed* and *needs to be mopped*. The responses for these speakers were discarded from the analysis.

In addition to the forced-choice task between *need* + V-*en* and *need* + V-*ing*, the written portion of the survey elicited acceptability judgments for one sentence with *need* + V-*en*:

(8.16) I got into an accident last week, and now my front bumper needs repaired.

Figures 8.8 and 8.9 present the results for the forced-choice task in Examples 8.14 and 8.15, and the responses Example for 8.16 are presented in Figure 8.10.

In addition to the use of *need* + V-*en*, Murray and Simon (1999) and Murray and Simon (2002) have shown that a similar use of the Past Participle exists with the verbs *want* and *like*. These uses are also confined to the Midland region, and are both substantially more restricted than the use of *need* + V-*en*. Their research into the three constructions shows an implicational scale of acceptability such that if a speaker accepts *like* + V-*en* they will also accept *want* + V-*en*; similarly, if they accepts *want* + V-*en*, they will also accept *need* + V-*en*. Their maps for want + V-*en* and like + V-*en* show a heavy concentration of positive attestations in Western Pennsylvania around the Pittsburgh area. In order to determine whehter these constructions are also acceptable as far north as Erie, my survey also elicited acceptability judgments for the sentences in Examples 8.17 and 8.18:

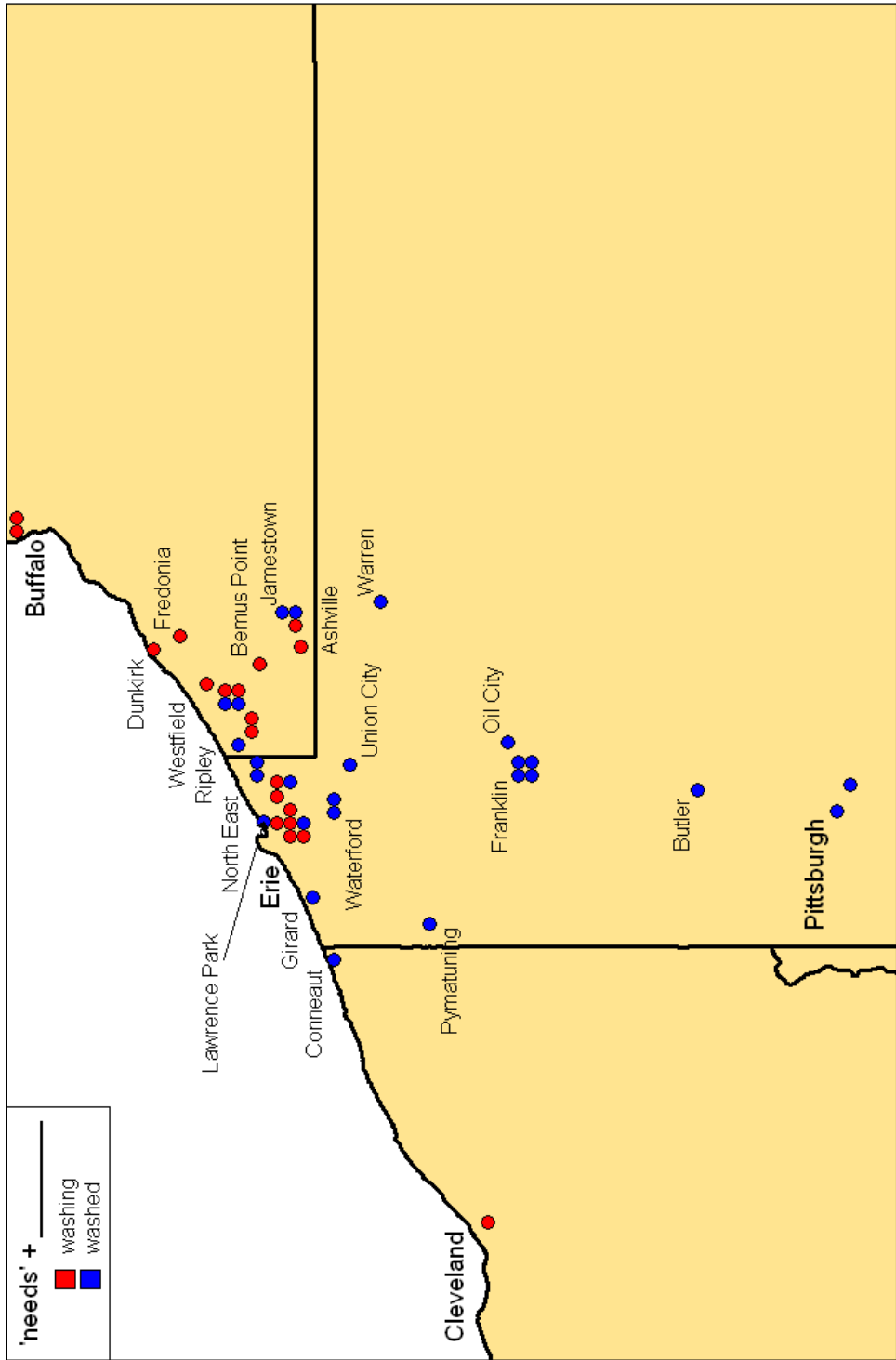(8.17) My cat looks really hungry. I think he wants fed.

Figure 8.8: Responsed for the forced-choice completion task for the sentence *I drove through a big, muddy puddle yesterday. Now my car needs _____.*
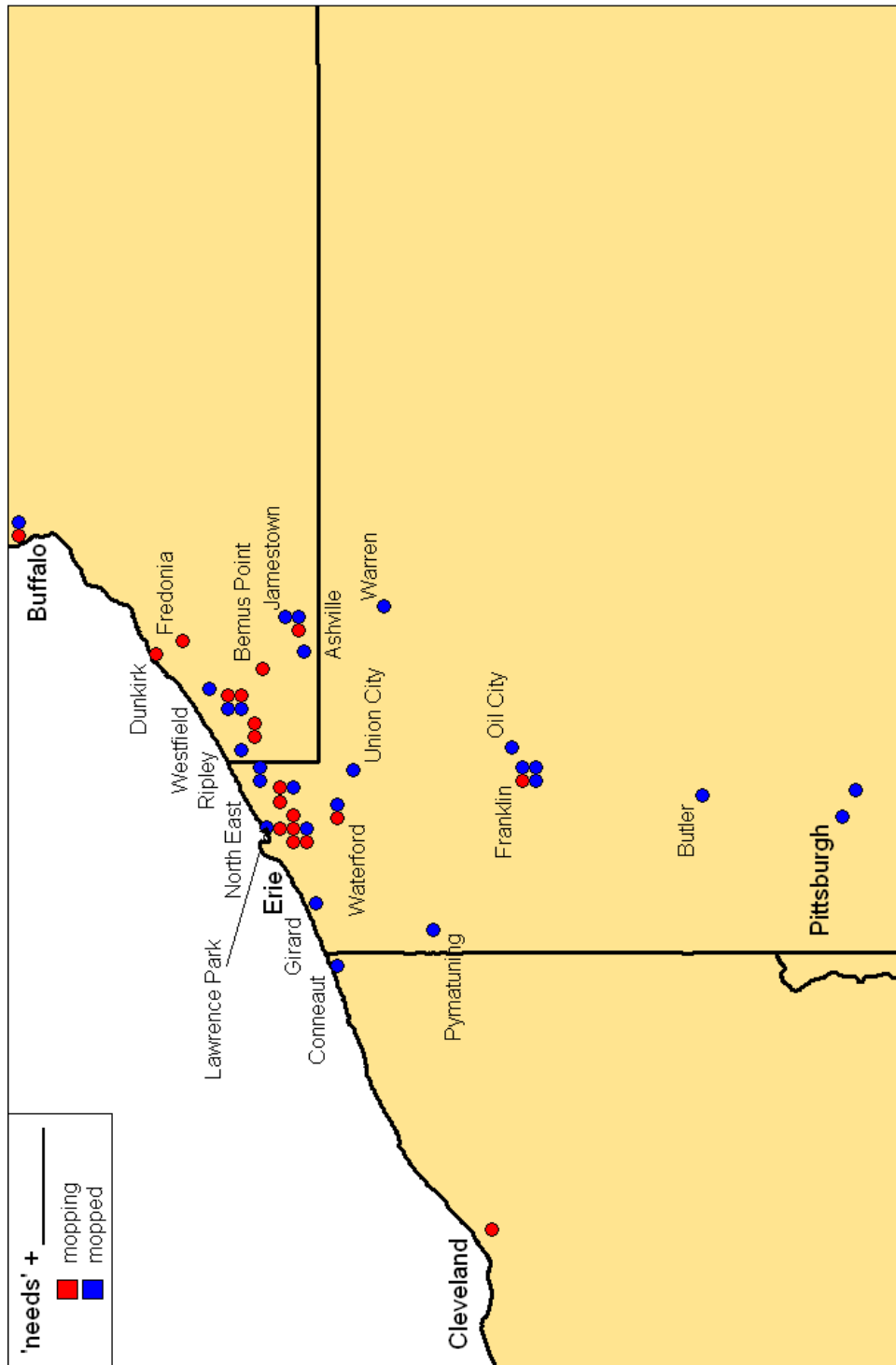
Figure 8.9: Responsed for the forced-choice completion task for the sentence *I haven't cleaned my kitchen in weeks. The floor really needs _____.*
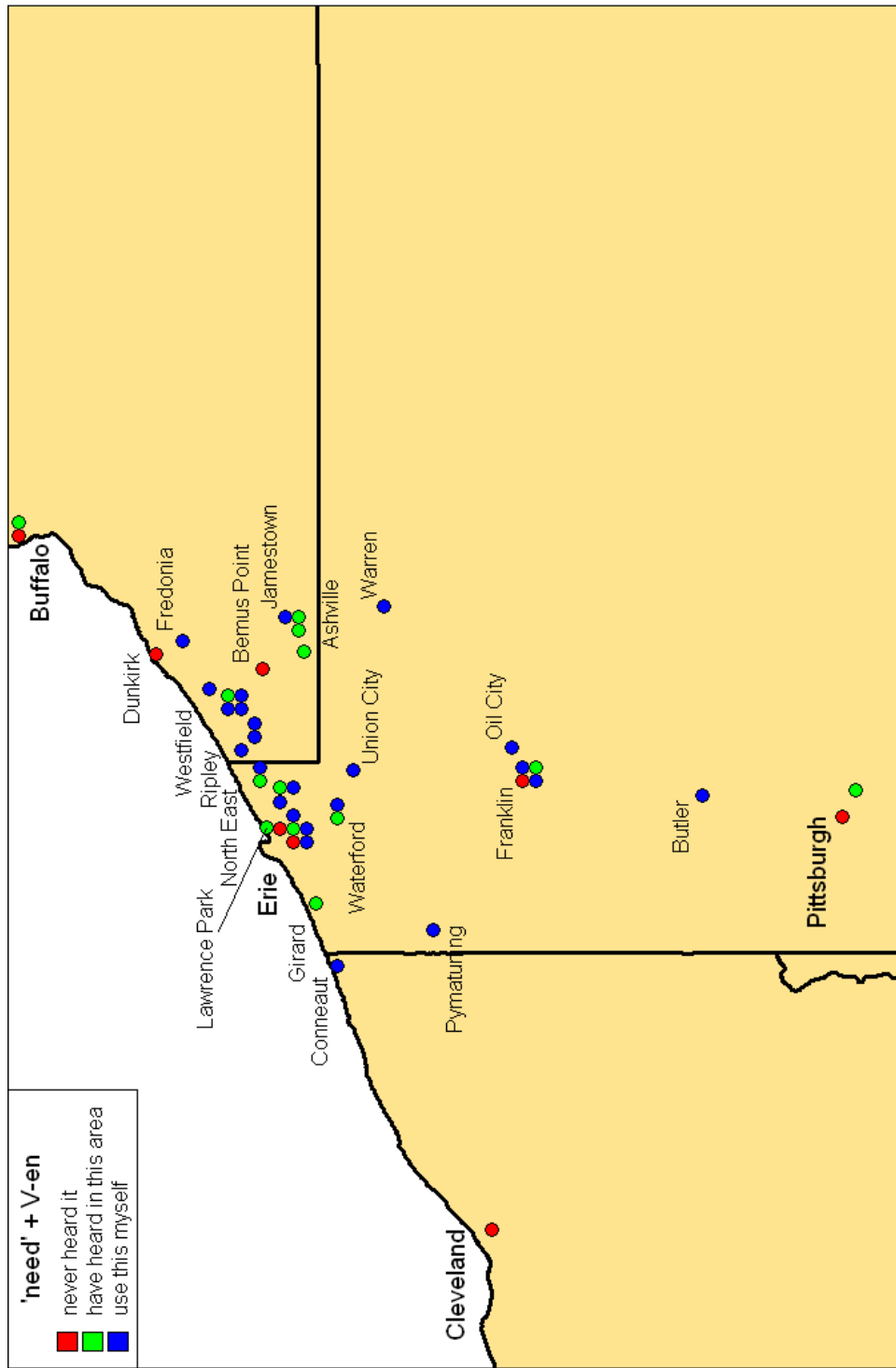
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Figure 8.10: Acceptability responses for the sentence *I got into an accident last week, and now my front bumper needs repaired.*

(8.18) Every newborn baby likes cuddled.

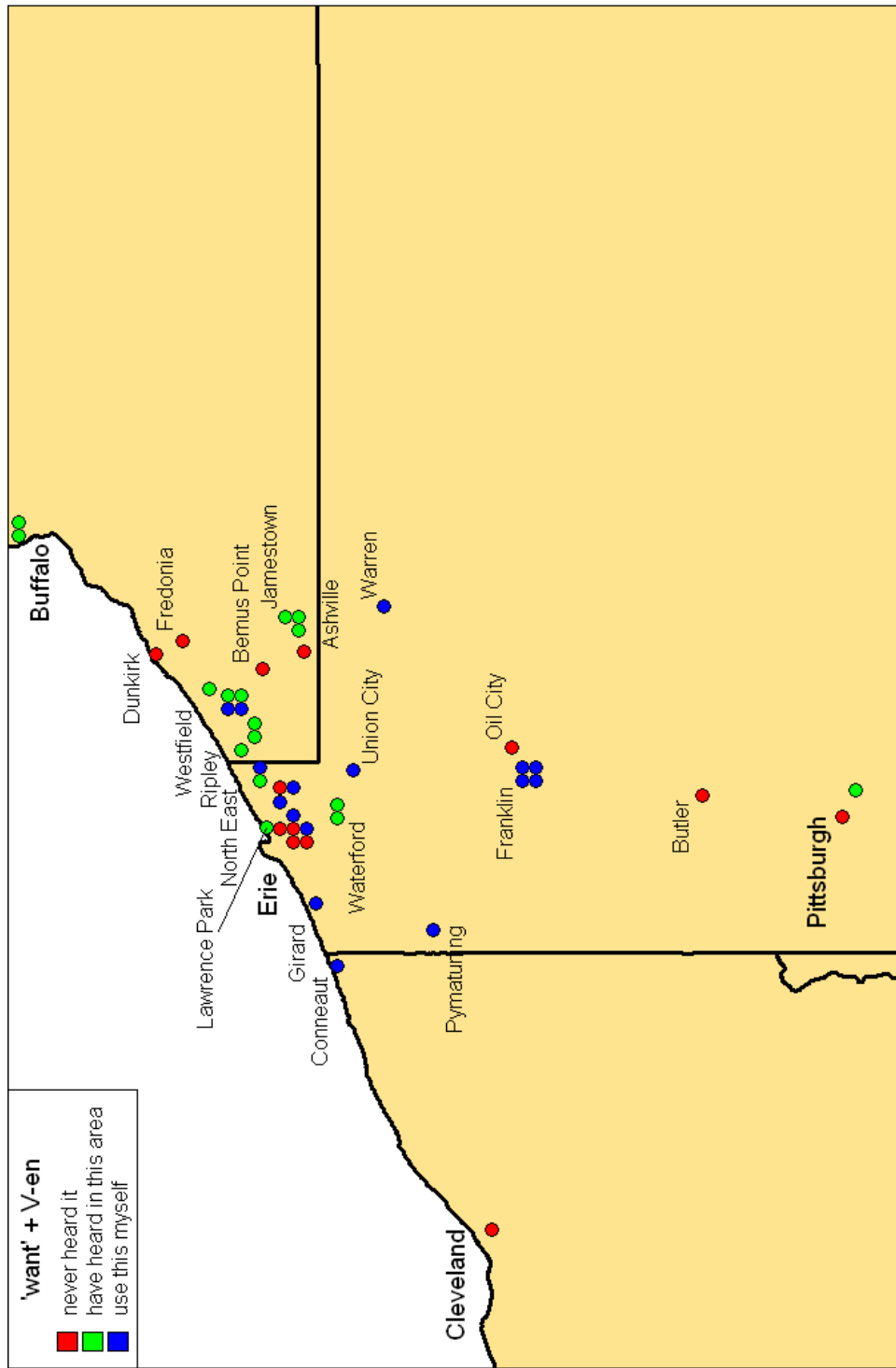Figures 8.11 and 8.12 present the results for the sentences in 8.17 and 8.18.

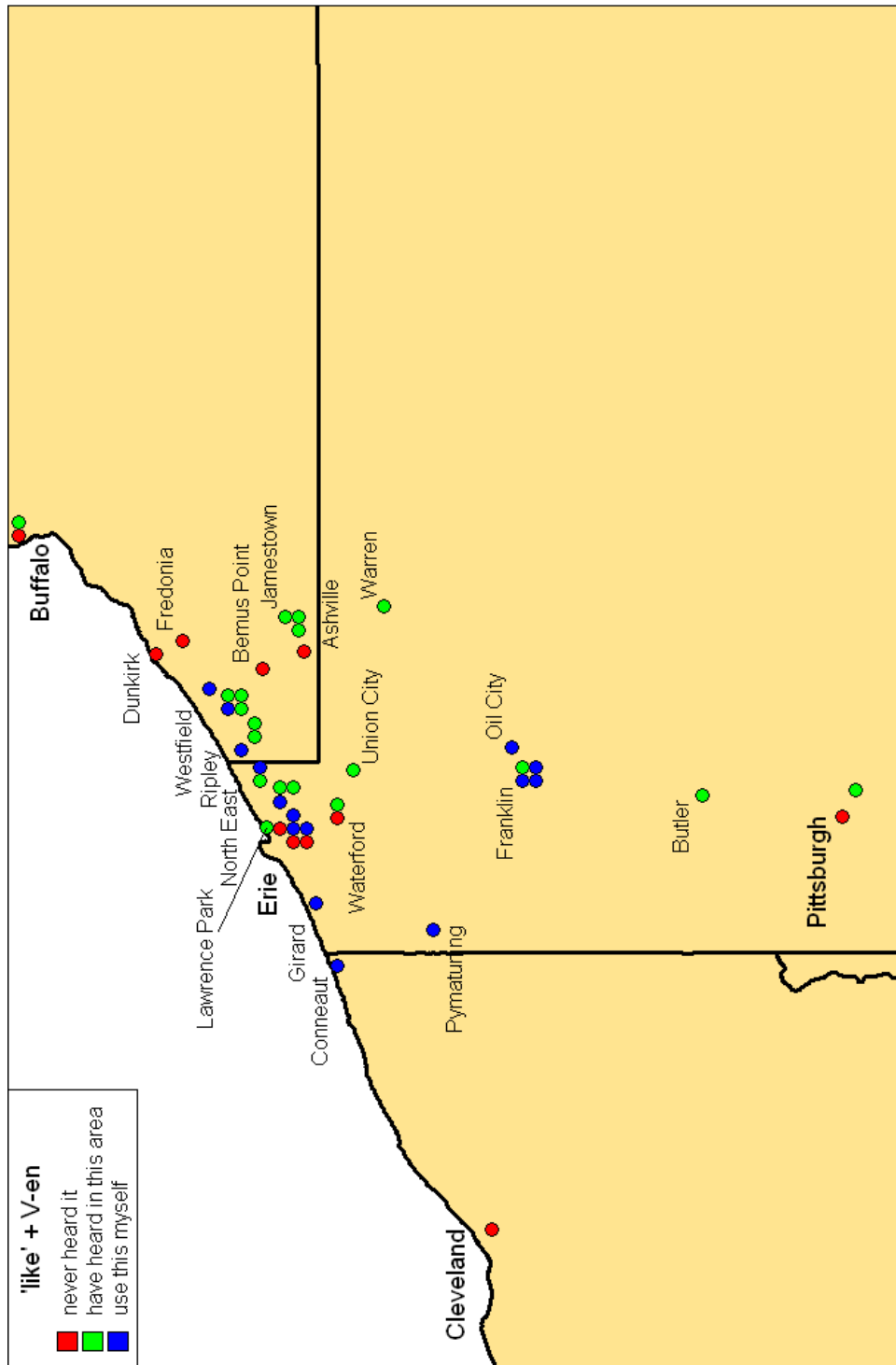Figure 8.11: Acceptability responses for the sentences *My cat looks really hungry. I think he wants fed.*

Figure 8.12: Acceptability responses for the sentence *Every newborn baby likes cuddled.*