

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**by Stephen Wilbers**

**[www.wilbers.com/contents.htm](http://www.wilbers.com/contents.htm)**

**[www.wilbers.com/CredibilityErrors.pdf](http://www.wilbers.com/CredibilityErrors.pdf)**

**Use the right arrow key to advance my slides.**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Please note:**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**To change your muscle memory,**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**To change your muscle memory,  
you need to speak out loud when you see the prompt,**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**To change your muscle memory,  
you need to speak out loud when you see the prompt,**

**“Say it with me.”**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Or when you see the prompt,**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Or when you see the prompt,**

**"Say."**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**When you see**

**"Not"**



**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

Or when you see

**“Don't say”**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Don't say anything.**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Don't say anything.**

**Eliminate that incorrect speech pattern  
from your mind and your lips.**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**And if you're somewhere where speaking out loud would be rude,**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**And if you're somewhere where speaking out loud would be rude,  
don't worry about it.**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**The people you are annoying will thank you**

# **Don't undermine your credibility when speaking.**

**The people you are annoying will thank you  
when they realize you are correcting bad speech habits.**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Ready?**



**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Avoid seven grammatical errors.**

**Don't undermine your credibility  
when speaking.**

**Avoid seven grammatical errors.**

**Here they are.**

**1. Say May I? not Can I?**

**1. Say May I? not Can I?**

**2. Say Lie down not Lay down**

**1. Say May I? not Can I?**

**2. Say Lie down not Lay down**

**3. Say Finished not Done**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**
- 5. Say There're lots not There's lots**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**
- 5. Say There're lots not There's lots**
- 6. Say I not Me or Myself for subjects**



- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**
- 5. Say There're lots not There's lots**
- 6. Say I not Me or Myself for subjects**
- 7. Say Me not I or Myself for objects**

**Let's practice.**

# Error Number 1

# Error Number 1

## Misused Word Pair

# Error Number 1

## Misused Word Pair

**Can I? / May I?**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**not**

**“Can I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**



**May suggests possibility  
or permission.**

**As in**

**May I come with you?**

**Can suggests ability  
or capability.**

**As in**

**Can I finish this on time?**

**So if you're asking  
permission, say**

**“May I?”**

**So if you're asking  
permission, say**

**“May I?”**

**not**

**“Can I?”**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“May I?”**



**Say it with me.**

**“May I?”**

**Say it with me.**

**“May I?”**

**So if you're asking  
permission, don't say**

**“Can I?”**

**So if you're asking  
permission, don't say**

**“Can I?”**

**So if you're asking  
permission, don't say**

**“Can I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**



# **Remember:**

**May suggests possibility  
or permission.**

**Can suggests ability  
or capability.**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**not**

**“Can I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Or better yet, say**

**“May I, please?”**

# Error Number 2



# Error Number 2

## Misused Word Pair

# **Error Number 2**

## **Misused Word Pair**

**Lay down / Lie down**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**not**

**“Lay down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**To lie is to recline.**

**As in**

**I need to lie down.**

**To lay is to place or set.**



**As in**

**I lay my head on my pillow.**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**not**

**“Lay down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**But note:**

**But note:**

**The past tense of lie is lay,**

**But note:**

**The past tense of lie is lay,**

**which is confusing.**

**As in**

**I need to lie down.**

**but**

**Yesterday I lay down.**



**But remember:**

**But remember:**

**To lie is to recline.**

**But remember:**

**To lie is to recline.**

**To lay is to place or set.**

**So you should say**

**“Lie down.”**

**So you should say**

**“Lie down.”**

**not**

**“Lay down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“Lie down.”**



**Say it with me.**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“Lie down.”**

**Remember:**

**To lie is to recline.**

**To lay is to place or set.**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**not**

**“Lay down.”**

**If you're telling someone  
to recline, don't say**

**“Lay down.”**

**If you're telling someone  
to recline, don't say**

**“Lay down.”**

**If you're telling someone  
to recline, don't say**

**“Lay down.”**



**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

# Error Number 3

# Error Number 3

## Misused Word Pair

# **Error Number 3**

## **Misused Word Pair**

**I'm done. / I'm finished.**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**not**

**“I’m done.”**



**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**A person is finished.**

**A person is finished.**

**A task is finished.**

**A person is finished.**

**A task is finished.**

**A cake is done.**

**So unless you have been  
placed in an oven and you  
are being baked for a meal,**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**not**

**“I’m done.”**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**



**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Remember:**

**A person is finished.**

**A task is finished.**

**A cake is done.**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**not**

**“I’m done.”**

**So unless you have been  
placed in an oven and you  
are being baked for a meal,**



**Don't say**

**“I'm done.”**

# Don't say

“I'm done.”

# Don't say

“I'm done.”

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

# Error Number 4

# Error Number 4

## Misused Word Pair



# Error Number 4

## Misused Word Pair

The teacher **that** cares . . .

The teacher **who** cares . . .

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**not**

**“The teacher that cares . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**Who** refers to people.

**As in**

**The teacher who cares . . .**

**That refers to things.**

**As in**

**The book that inspires . . .**



**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**and**

**“The book that inspires . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**not**

**“The teacher that cares . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**Say it with me.**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**Say it with me.**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**



**Remember:**

**Who** refers to people.

**That** refers to things.

**Don't say**

**“The teacher that cares . . .”**

**Don't say**

**“The teacher that cares . . .”**

# Don't say

**“The teacher that cares . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who . . .”**

**Say**

**“who”**



**Say**

**“who”**

**Say**

**“who”**

# Error Number 5

# Error Number 5

## Subject-Verb Agreement

# **Error Number 5**

## **Subject-Verb Agreement**

**There is lots of reasons . . .**

**There are lots of reasons . . . .**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**not**

**“There is lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**



**Singular subjects take singular verbs.**

**Singular subjects take singular verbs.**

**Plural subjects take plural verbs.**

**Also, it should be**

**One of you is wrong.**

**not**

**One of you are wrong.**

**And it should be**

**Some people are wondering why.**

**not**

**Some people is wondering why.**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**not**

**“There is lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**



**Say it with me.**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say it with me.**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**Don't say**

**“There is lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots . . .”**

**Or say**

**“They’re lots . . .”**



**Or say**

**“They’re lots . . .”**

**Or say**

**“They’re lots . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**not**

**“There is lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

# Error Number 6

# Error Number 6

## Pronoun Case

# Error Number 6

## Pronoun Case

My friend and **me** are going.

My friend and **I** are going.

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**



**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**not**

**“My friend and me are going.”**

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**not**

**“My friend and me are going.”**

**and not**

**“Me and my friend are going.”**

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**Subjects are I.**

**Objects are me.**

**I am going with my friend.**

**My friend is going with me.**

**I wrote the message.**

**Send the message to me.**

**Subjects are I.**

**Objects are me.**

**Send the message to me.**



**Send the message to me.**

**not**

**Send the message to I.**

**Send the message to me.**

**not**

**Send the message to I.**

**and not**

**Send the message to myself.**

**Send the message to me.**

**Send it to me.**

**Send it to my friend and me.**

**Send it to my friend and me.**

**not**

**Send it to my friend and I.**

**Send it to my friend and me.**

**not**

**Send it to my friend and I.**

**and not**

**Send it to my friend and myself.**

**Send it to my friend and me.**



**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**“Send the message to me.”**



**Don't say**

**“My friend and me are going.”**

**Don't say**

**“My friend and me are going.”**

**and don't say**

**“Send the message to my friend and I.”**

**Don't say**

**“My friend and me are going.”**

**and don't say**

**“Send the message to my friend and I.”**

**and don't say**

**“Send the message to my friend and myself.”**

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**and**

**“Send the message to my friend and me.”**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**



**Say it with me.**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

# Error Number 7

# Error Number 7

## Pronoun Case

# **Error Number 7**

## **Pronoun Case**

**Between you and I . . .**

**Between you and me . . .**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**not**

**“Between you and I . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**not**

**“Between you and I . . .”**

**and not**

**“Between you and myself . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**



**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**Say it with me.**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**Say it with me.**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**not**

**“Between you and I . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

# Review

**Seven ways to avoid  
undermining your credibility**



**1. Say May I? not Can I?**

**1. Say May I? not Can I?**

**2. Say Lie down not Lay down**

**1. Say May I? not Can I?**

**2. Say Lie down not Lay down**

**3. Say Finished not Done**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**
- 5. Say There're lots not There's lots**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**
- 5. Say There're lots not There's lots**
- 6. Say I not Me or Myself for subjects**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**
- 5. Say There're lots not There's lots**
- 6. Say I not Me or Myself for subjects**
- 7. Say Me not I or Myself for objects**

# Error Number 1



# Error Number 1

## Misused Word Pair

# Error Number 1

## Misused Word Pair

**Can I? / May I?**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

**not**

**“Can I?”**

**Say**

**“May I?”**

# Error Number 2

# Error Number 2

## Misused Word Pair

# **Error Number 2**

## **Misused Word Pair**

**Lay down / Lie down**



**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

**not**

**“Lay down.”**

**Say**

**“Lie down.”**

# Error Number 3

# Error Number 3

## Misused Word Pair

# **Error Number 3**

## **Misused Word Pair**

**I'm done. / I'm finished.**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

**not**

**“I’m done.”**



**Say**

**“I’m finished.”**

# Error Number 4

# Error Number 4

## Misused Word Pair

# Error Number 4

## Misused Word Pair

The teacher **that** cares . . .

The teacher **who** cares . . .

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

**not**

**“The teacher that cares . . .”**

**Say**

**“The teacher who cares . . .”**

# Error Number 5



# **Error Number 5**

## **Subject-Verb Agreement**

**There is lots of reasons . . .**

**There are lots of reasons . . . .**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

**not**

**“There is lots of reasons . . .”**

**Say**

**“There are lots of reasons . . .”**

# Error Number 6

# Error Number 6

## Pronoun Case

# Error Number 6

## Pronoun Case

My friend and **me** are going.

My friend and **I** are going.

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**



**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**not**

**“My friend and me are going.”**

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**not**

**“My friend and me are going.”**

**and not**

**“Me and my friend are going.”**

**Say**

**“My friend and I are going.”**

**Say**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**Say**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**not**

**“Send the message to I.”**

**Say**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**not**

**“Send the message to I.”**

**and not**

**“Send the message to myself.”**

**Say**

**“Send the message to me.”**

**Say**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**



**Say**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

**not**

**“Send it to my friend and I.”**

**Say**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

**not**

**“Send it to my friend and I.”**

**and not**

**“Send it to my friend and myself.”**

**Say**

**“Send it to my friend and me.”**

# Error Number 7

# Error Number 7

## Pronoun Case

# Error Number 7

## Pronoun Case

**Between you and I . . .**

**Between you and me . . .**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**not**

**“Between you and I . . .”**



**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

**not**

**“Between you and I . . .”**

**and not**

**“Between you and myself . . .”**

**Say**

**“Between you and me . . .”**

# **Seven ways to avoid undermining your credibility**

- 1. Say May I? not Can I?**
- 2. Say Lie down not Lay down**
- 3. Say Finished not Done**
- 4. Say Who not That for people**
- 5. Say There're lots not There's lots**
- 6. Say I not Me or Myself for subjects**
- 7. Say Me not I or Myself for objects**

# **Seven ways to avoid undermining your credibility**

**Seven ways to avoid  
undermining your credibility**

**And one more for  
good measure!**

# Error Number 8

# Error Number 8

## Misused Word Pair



# **Error Number 8**

## **Misused Word Pair**

**I feel badly. / I feel unwell.**

**Say**

**“I feel unwell.”**

**Say**

**“I feel unwell.”**

**not**

**“I feel badly.”**

**Say**

**“I feel unwell.”**

**Feeling well refers to health.**

**As in**

**I'm feeling well.**

**and in**

**I'm feeling unwell.**

**As in**

**I'm feeling well.**

**or in**

**I'm not feeling well.**

**Feeling badly describes how well  
your nerves are working.**



**As in**

**My hands are so numb**

**As in**

**My hands are so numb  
that my fingers are feeling badly.**

**So if you're referring to health,  
say**

**“I'm feeling well.”**

**So if you're referring to health,  
say**

**“I'm feeling well.”**

**or**

**“I'm feeling unwell.”**

**So if you're referring to health,  
say**

**“I'm feeling well.”**

**or**

**“I'm not feeling well.”**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“I’m feeling well.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“I’m feeling well.”**



**Say it with me.**

**“I’m feeling well.”**

**Say**

**“I feel unwell.”**

**Say**

**“I feel unwell.”**

**or**

**“I don’t feel well.”**

**Eight ways to avoid  
undermining your credibility**

**And one more one last time!**

# Error Number 9

# Error Number 9

Adjectives in place of adverbs

# Error Number 9

## Adjectives in place of adverbs

**You did real good. / You did really well.**

**Say**

**“You did really well.”**



**Say**

**“You did really well.”**

**not**

**“You did real good.”**

**Adjectives modify persons and things.**

**Adjectives modify persons and things.**

**As in**

**That girl is tall.**

**Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.**

**Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.**

**As in**

**That girl is really tall.**

**Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.**

**and in**

**That really tall girl played really well.**

**Say it with me.**

**Say it with me.**

**“You did well.”**



**Say it with me.**

**“You did well.”**

**Say it with me.**

**“You did well.”**

**Say**

**“You did well.”**

**Say**

**“You did well.”**

**not**

**“You did good.”**

**Don't say**

**“You did good.”**

**Don't say**

**“You did good.”**

# Don't say

**“You did good.”**

**And don't say**

**“You did real good.”**



**And don't say**

**“You did real good.”**

# And don't say

*“You did real good.”*

**Say**

**“You did well.”**

**Say**

**“You did well.”**

**Say**

**“You did well.”**

**Or say**

**“You did really well.”**

**Or say**

**“You did really well.”**

**Or say**

**“You did really well.”**



**“really well”**

**“really well”**

**“really well”**

**“You did really well.”**

**And so did you!**

# Congrats!



