FIVE FUNDAMENTAL CATEGORIES

There are five and only five Fundamental Categories (FC) namely Personality, Matter, Energy, Space, and Time. The abbreviation is [P],[M],[E],[S] and [T] respectively. Keeping in view the interrelated nature of these five FCs, Dr S.R.Ranganathan sequenced them as PMEST in order of decreasing concreteness of categories. These terms and the ideas denoted by them, belong strictly to the context of classificatory discipline. It may be stated that [S] and [T] have their usual significance, [E] signifies action of one kind or another, [M] signifies property of the matter and [P] signifies the core component and the leading part. According to the Postulate of five FCs, each isolate facet in a Compound Subject (CS) should be deemed to be a manifestation of one and only one of one or other of the Five FCs. Each FC has a separate Indicator Digit:

FC	Indicator Digit
Personality	, (Comma)
Matter	; (Semi Colon)
Energy	: (Colon)
Space	. (Dot)
* Time	' (Dot)

The respective ordinal values of the Indicator Digits were so fixed as to throw them in the above decreasing sequence. Further, their ordinal values were all taken to be smaller than that of any substantive digit used in CC. This solved the problem. This ideas was incorporated in CC, Ed 4 (1952) and in the Prolegomena, Ed 2 (1957)

* In 1959, the Indicator Digit for Time was changed to ' (Single inverted comma), at the suggestion of P.B.Roy, Librarian of the Commercial Intelligence and Statistics Library, Calcutta. This increased the versatility of the notational system.

Reference
http://www.isibang.ac.in/~library/portal/Pages/chp1.pdf