

**KKAR Classification Scheme, with Operational Coding  
for IMLS—OCLC—Rutgers “Seeking Synchronicity” project**

**Updated 5/23/06 by MR**

<b>Katz (1997) Classification Scheme, modified by Kaske and Arnold (2002) and Radford (2005-2006)</b>		
<b>Directional</b>	<b>D</b>	““Where is the catalog?’ ‘Where are the indexes?’ ...The general information or directional question is of the information booth variety, and the answer rarely requires more than geographical knowledge of key locations. The time required to answer such questions is negligible...”
<b>Ready Reference</b>	<b>RR</b>	““What is the name of the governor of Alaska?’ ‘How long is the Amazon River?’ ...These are the typical ready-reference or data queries that require only a single, usually uncomplicated, straightforward answer. The requested information is normally found without difficulty in standard reference works, ranging from encyclopedias to almanacs and indexes... Ready-reference queries may be divided and subdivided in many ways...Who? What? When? Why? Where?...It usually takes more than a minute or two to answer this type of question.”
<b>Subject Search</b>	<b>SS</b>	““Where can I find information on sexism in business?’ ‘What is the difference between the conservative and the liberal views on inflation and unemployment?’ ...The essential difference between the specific-search and the ready-reference question is important. Ready-reference queries usually can be answered with data, normally short answers from reference books...” (Note, Katz/Kaske/Arnold called this “Specific Search”)
<b>Research</b>	<b>R</b>	“Almost any of the types of questions described in the ‘specific-[subject] search’ section above may be turned into research questions. A research query is usually identified as that coming from an adult specialist who is seeking detailed information to assist in specific work...Research questions differ from other inquiries in that most involve trial-and-error searching or browsing, primarily because (a) the average researcher may have a vague notion of the question but usually cannot be specific; (b) the answer to the yet-to-be-completely formulated question depends on what the researcher is able to find (or not find)...another useful method of distinguishing types of queries.”
<b>Policy and Procedural</b>	<b>PP</b>	Includes questions like: “How do I borrow books?” “How do I get access to my patron information?” “How do I borrow books from another library?” Most of these questions begin with “How do I?” They differ from directional questions in that they usually require some explanation of a policy or a procedure.
<b>Holdings / Do You Own?</b>	<b>H</b>	Questions about specific holdings of a library in print or digital form. Normally, the customer has the title of a book, journal, video, etc. and would like to know if the library owns the material. Also includes how to locate journal articles. “How do I get the full text of a particular journal article when I have the citation?” (Note: last 2 sentences added by Radford)

<b>Additional Categories Identified by Radford (2005-2006)</b>		
<b>No Question</b>	<b>N</b>	Includes systems test, practice sessions between 2 librarians, any interaction in which there is no discernable reference question.
<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>I</b>	Questions which are not appropriate for a reference service including personal questions (e.g., “How old are you?”), goofing around (e.g., “What can I do? I’m bored.”), rude questions (e.g., “How do you have sex?”), or questions containing obscene language.
<b>Reader’s Advisory</b>	<b>RA</b>	Reader’s Advisory questions are asked by users who want to “find books they want to read, usually fiction books to be read for pleasure” (Ross, Nilsen, & Dewdney, 2002, p. 162). (e.g., “I read <i>The DaVinci Code</i> by Dan Brown, what other books can I read that are like this one?”)

(Note: The Katz Classification Scheme, with modifications by Kaske and Arnold, appears as Appendix E to the “Seeking Synchronicity...” project proposal.)

Ross, C.S., Nilsen, K., & Dewdney, P. (2002). *Conducting the reference interview: A how-to-do-it manual for librarians*. NY: Neal-Schumann.