

Interview with Expert Textile Recycler

Interviewer: Cathryn Anneka Hall

Interviewee: Textile Wool Recycling Expert working for a company in Prato, Italy

Questions and answers extracted and summarised from a whatsapp interview.

March 2021

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

I have some questions about colour.

This is the melange colour (it's a mix of blue, yellow and navy) I was asking about? Do you recycle this type of knit in its own category? Or Do you combine it with other wastes to recycle?



[sent image of Yarn 4]

Recycler:

I can recycle with, for example colour 'avio' on my shade card which is a blue melange. For that colour I can recycled this type of jumper.

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

What about this one with navy and turquoise?



[sent image of Yarn 2]

Recycler:

It is the same. I have some blue groups, for example, dark blue, navy blue, light blue but it is not possible to put this into these categories because these colour categories are not melange. But the melange colours such as 'avio' or 'dark avio', melange colours are suitable for creating these melange yarns so this could be used. It is possible to recycle it like this.

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

Fancy waste - can this only be downcycled? Can you use this for recycling for yarn?



[sent image of fancy checked woven]

Recycler:

Regarding these fancy fabrics, the recycling depends on the composition. Say the composition is wool/nylon or wool/acrylic or wool/polyester specifically or better pure composition like pure wool or pure acrylic then you can dye it. All the fancy material you can dye it the dark colours such as blue, black or dark brown. If the composition is easy to dye otherwise you can put it in the waste. One of the solutions to recycle this waste is you can create felt for insulation or insulation for car interiors. There is a lot of applications but not in textiles for clothing.

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

The recycled navy acrylic fibre you sold me, might this have been overdyed?

Recycler:

Yes it could be.

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

This one has two contrasting colours how would you deal with this type of colour? Downcycle it or can it be used?



[sent image of contrasting coloured knit]

Recycler:

This is the same for the fancy fabrics but because it is a melange made up of black and white. We can use it for a fancy yarn called 'Filato bottonato'. You can use this fibre and put it inside with a grey colour and when you produce the yarn it is not a solid colour or a melange colour and there are 'buttons' of other colours for example, medium grey yarn with buttons in white, button grey/dark grey and button in black. You could recycle this kind like this. But also, in this case, it all depends on the composition. Either Wool/acrylic or pure wool is better to recycle. If the jumper is made from a lot of compositions, then it is better to put it in waste and it becomes felt, insulation and applications not in textiles and clothing.

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

Is Filato bottonato yarn used to make this type of fabric?



[sent images of multi coloured filato bottonato (neps)]

Recycler:

[sent an image of filato bottonato yarn from the range]

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

Could you recycle this material?



[sent image again of multi coloured filato bottonato (neps)]

Recycler:

This you cannot recycle because the colours are different from grey and white and it is difficult to know what colour to sort it in to so it is not possible.

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

What about a jumper with a double pattern? Can it be used for melange shade? Would this be recycled with dark navy jumpers?



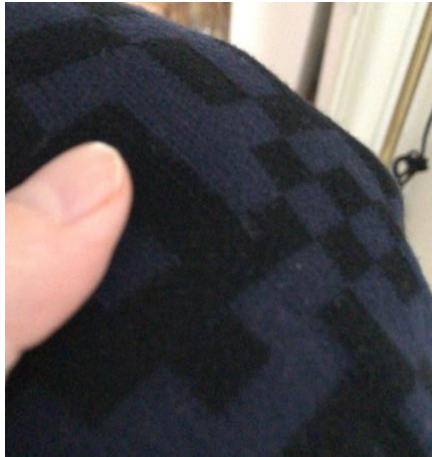
[sent image of navy and black patterned knit – black looks a little brown]

Recycler:

No Cathryn, this is not melange, this is fancy for us. It is two different colours. From my view it is brown and grey, so it is not melange. This is fancy. We can only dye if we recycle it. We dye it if it has a good composition or it becomes felt etc...

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

The picture is not good. The colours are black and navy. Does this make a difference?



[sent another image of navy and black patterned knit – black looks black]

Recycler:

In this case it depends about the material. If it is woven it cannot be recycled. If it is knitted you can recycle it. If the textile is knitted the quality is higher, but from the picture it looks like it is woven, so for me it is not good to recycle. But if it is a knitted jumper with dark blue and black you can put it in either the blue or the black sorting category. A little navy in the black is not a problem.

Cathryn Anneka Hall:

Thank you so much.