Fashion DIET

Chances and Risks of Slow Fashion Strategies and a Circular Economy in the European Market

Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg
University of Education

Hochschule Reutlingen
Reutlingen University

Universitatea Tehnica "Gheorghe Asachi"
1813
Iasi

Тракийски университет
Стара Загора

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Learning Objectives

After this course students should be able to…

- Describe the logic behind slow fashion
- Outline the role of emotions for fashion consumption
- Describe the concept of empathic design
- Explain different steps towards a circular economy

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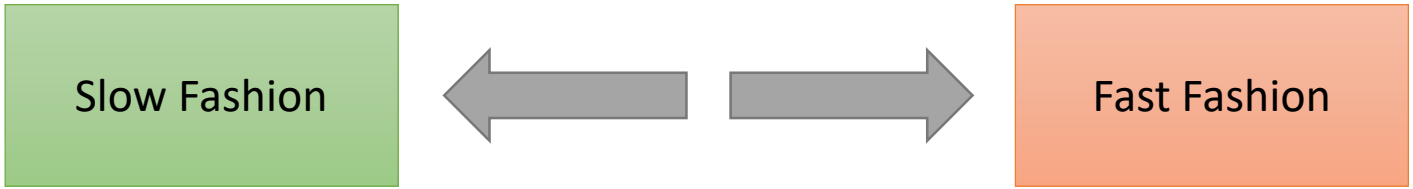
Slow Fashion

Slow fashion is a way to

"identify sustainable fashion solutions, based on the repositioning of strategies of design, production, consumption, use, and reuse, which are emerging alongside the global fashion system, and are posing a potential challenge to it." Hazel (2008) p.428



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Slow Fashion

- Sustainable way of living and consuming
- Quality to prolong the life of the garment
- Increasing awareness from manufacturers and consumers to decrease the production and consumption speed
- Development of clothes with a cultural and emotional connection

Consumers will keep clothes item longer if they feel emotionally or culturally connected to the items

Fletcher (2010); Kuusk et al. (2012)

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Slow Fashion

- Taxation at early stages of product development

→deters companies from purchasing or producing materials that are not made with recycled, organic, or re-purposed materials

- Utilization of already existing, discarded material or using material from small providers/sources
- Manufacture small numbers and/or production on demand
- Transparency

Fletcher (2010); Kuusk et al. (2012)

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Let´s discuss!

Please go to your wardrobe and pick your favorite item.

Why are you emotionally attached to this specific item? Please discuss!

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Product & Possession

- Most products are not designed for durability
- Low unit price and low quality → no longer worthwhile to repair products
- Economic system based on fast product replacement and planned obsolescence
- Material possession play an important role:
  - represent our personality, social standing and wealth, values, history and relationships with others

Niinimäki & Koskinen (2011)

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Emotions

- Material objects symbolize to us and others who we are
  - →Expression of identity, sexuality and sociality
  - →Expression of aspired lifestyle

Textiles and clothing = expressive products, which inspire emotions related to the consumption are sparked before and after the purchase event

Emotions play a decisive role

Niinimäki & Koskinen (2011)

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Product Attachement

- Consumers may develop emotional attachments to some objects but do not to others
- If an emotional attachment exists, consumers are not likely to dispose the product soon
  - →Consumers care for the product and are not likely to throw it away soon
  - →The product longevity is increased

Designers should find ways to foster the product-consumer attachment to lengthen the product lifespan

Niinimäki & Koskinen (2011)

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Product Attachement

Emotional values

- Memories (history/past, places, people, moments, childhood)
- Family ties
- Positive associations (e.g. safe and soft tactile feeling)

Quality

- High quality in design, materials and realization
- Durability

Functionality

- Multifunctionality
- Fit
- Reparability

Niinimäki & Koskinen (2011)

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Product Attachement

Design/style/Beauty

- Classical, timeless design, not too loud visual messages
- Strong design, represents some unique period of design style
- The experience of beauty in multisensorial ways

Material

- Ageing well, aesthetically, gracefully

Connection to ‘self’/Personal values

- Expression of ‘self’
- Uniqueness
- Made for me
- One’s own ideology

Niinimäki & Koskinen (2011)

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Product Attachement

Effort, Achievement

- Handmade
- Tailor-made
- Self-made
- Self-designed

Present/future experiences

- Promise of experiences (e.g. modification possibility, party garments, opportunities for narratives to emerge)
- Family ties and continuity aspect, objects as heirlooms
- Suitability for giftgiving
- Satisfying experiences

Niinimäki & Koskinen (2011)

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Empathic Design

- Observation + identification of hidden customer needs
- Create products that the customers may not even know that they desire yet
- Solutions that customers have difficulties to imagine because they are not familiar with new technological possibilities or because they are locked in a specific mindset

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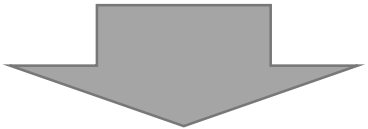
Empathic Design

- Designers focus on designing products with a longer lifespans
- Consumers should build a deeper relationship with the product in order to develop an emotional attachment → care for the product



Provide satisfying and continuing use experience:

High intrinsic product quality + satisfying aesthetical experiences + provide services that enable new experiences // fulfil consumers' changing needs

Niinimäki & Koskinen (2011)

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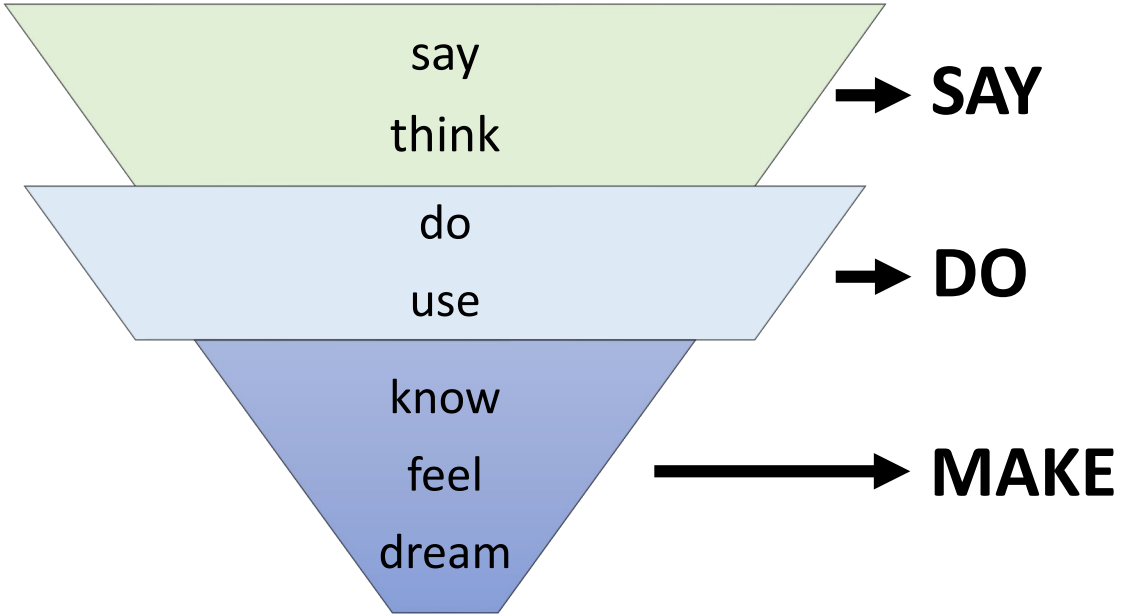
Empathic Design

What people…



Sanders (2002)

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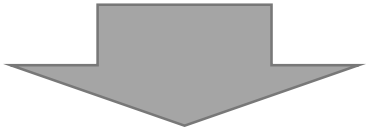
Empathic Design

- Three main layers of empathic design conduction: say, do, make.
- Say, do = interviews and observations
- Make = visualizing or expressing people's expectations/desires

→All three perspectives should be explored simultaneously



one can more readily understand and establish empathy with the people who use products

Sanders (2002)

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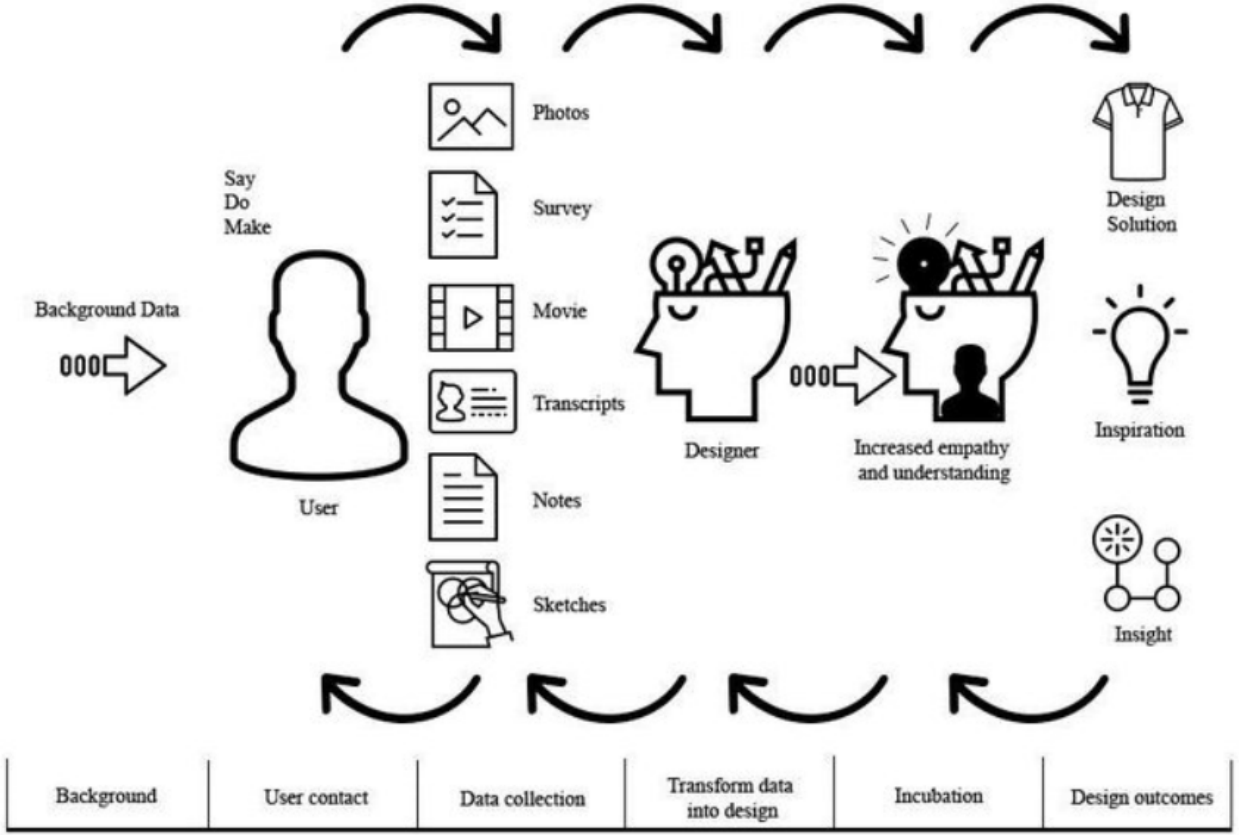
Empathic Design Model



The design process can be conducted vice versa as well:

Consideration of feedback in next design solutions

Ryabchykova (2017), p.11;
McDonagh (2006), p.12

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Strategies towards a Circular Economy (CE)

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Four main steps companies can follow to implement a CE approach

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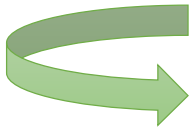
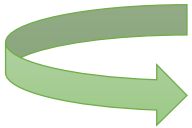
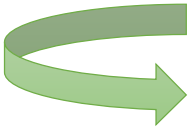
Close the loop



Improve the loop



Monetize the loop



Excite the loop

Frankenberger et al. (2021)

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Step 1: Close the Loop

The loop can be closed by direct reuse of products, by part-reuse measures such as refurbishment or traditional recycling, or through biodegradability:

- **Use an intelligent product design**
  - Modularity, reversible connection techniques, and the avoidance of mixed materials: simplifies assembly and disassembly and helps to recover the product at the end of life

Frankenberger et al. (2021), para. 2

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Step 1: Close the Loop

- Requires close collaboration with all partners along the circular value chain, as it is unlikely and often inefficient for a single firm to realize all the different activities (production, take back, disassembly, etc.) on its own

Collaborate closely with partners

- Companies are not used to interacting with all the companies in the loop, but have rather focused on direct supplier or customer relationships

Frankenberger et al. (2021), para. 2

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Step 2: Improve the Loop

Reducing the amount of resources and slowing down the flow of resources in the loop

→includes patterns like reparability, local production, and the use of renewable energies

→Firms need to dive deep into their own, as well as their partners', production processes and customer activities to understand the ecological footprint along the entire loop.

Frankenberger et al. (2021), para. 3

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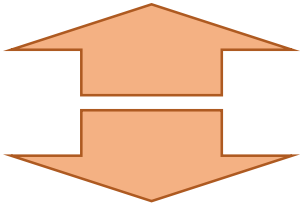
Step 2: Improve the Loop

This holistic view results in trade-off decisions, which are often not easy to make:

- The choice of a specific material might reduce the environmental footprint of your company



- It might increase the technical complexity and costs of another company in the ecosystem

→ Technology such as RFID can help.

Frankenberger et al. (2021), para. 3

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Step 3: Monetize the Loop

How to capture the value of the circular product?

Key challenges:

- Firms need to break the dominant logic in the industry and develop a radically new revenue model
- Firms need to invest enough time in the creation of the revenue model
- Many companies put a lot of effort in the development of technologies, products, and processes

Frankenberger et al. (2021), para. 4

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Step 3: Monetize the Loop

BUT: companies often forget the development of the right revenue model

→ Even the best circular product is of no value if the revenue model is not attractive for the customer

→ e.g. performance-based contracting revenue model: customers only pay for the performance of a product but not for the product itself

Frankenberger et al. (2021), para. 4

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Step 4: Excite the Loop

- Create attractive value propositions which go beyond the fact that the product is circular

→e.g. experience selling can lead to higher customer demand

→ how can a company create additional value for its customers by offering not only the product but an entire experience with its product?

Frankenberger et al. (2021), para.5

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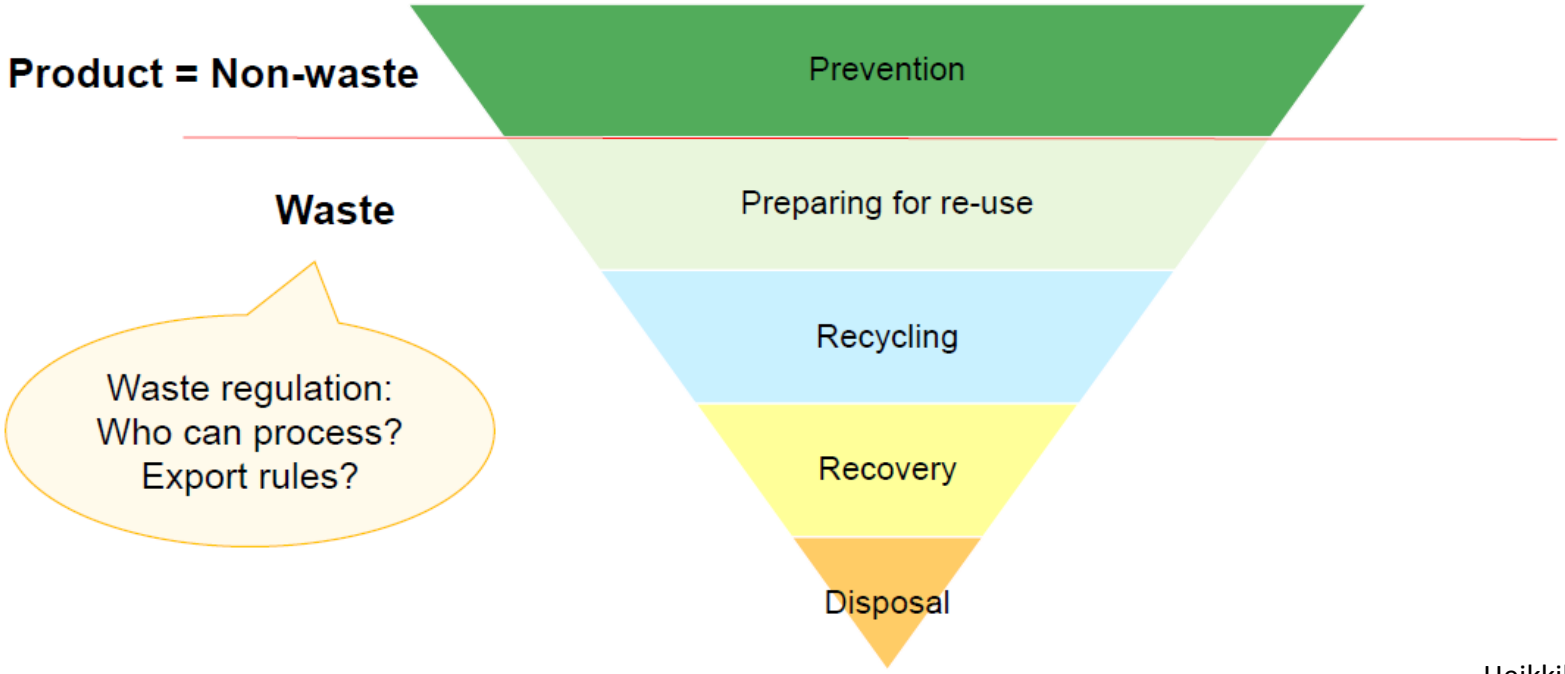
Waste Hierarchy



Heikkilä, P. (2018), p.8

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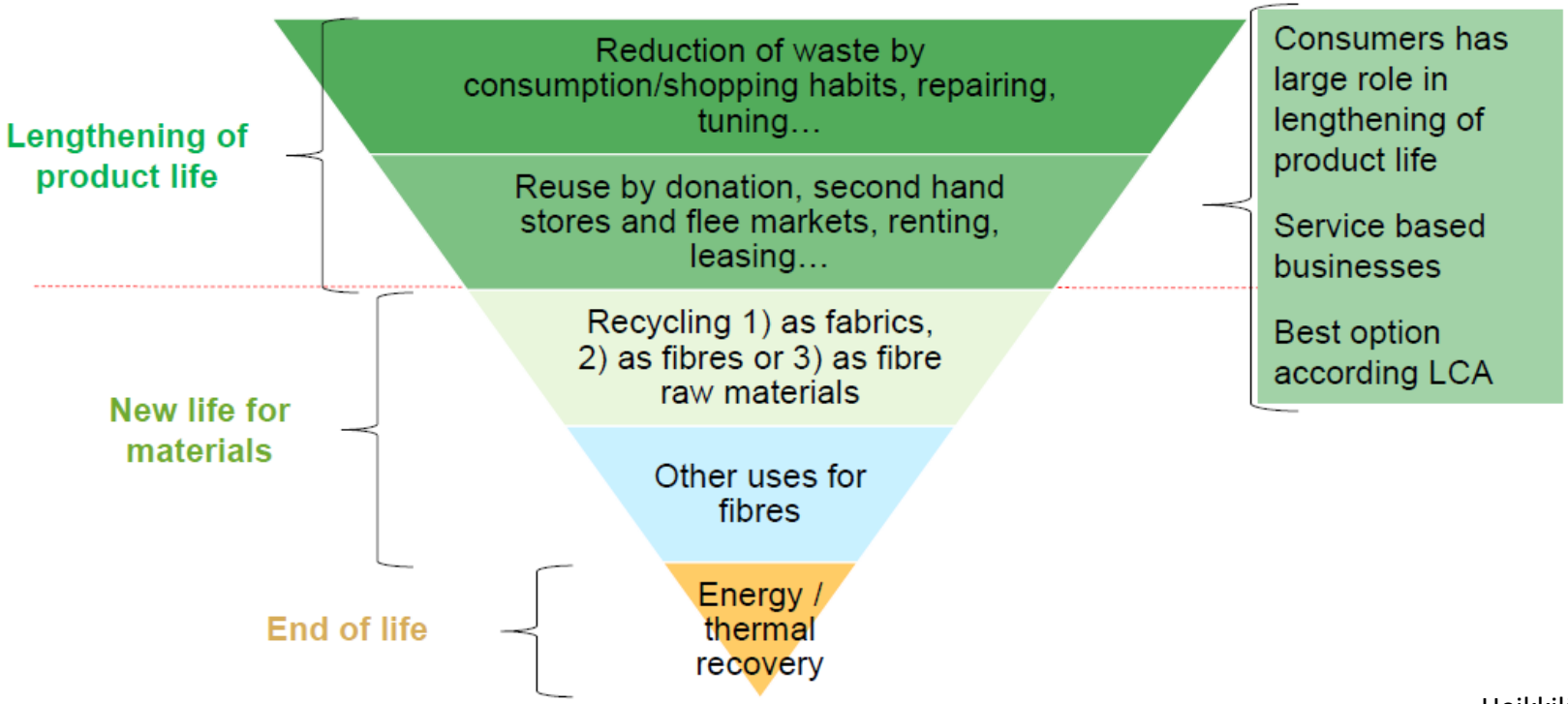
Adopted Waste Hierarchy and Textiles



Heikkilä, P. (2018), p.9

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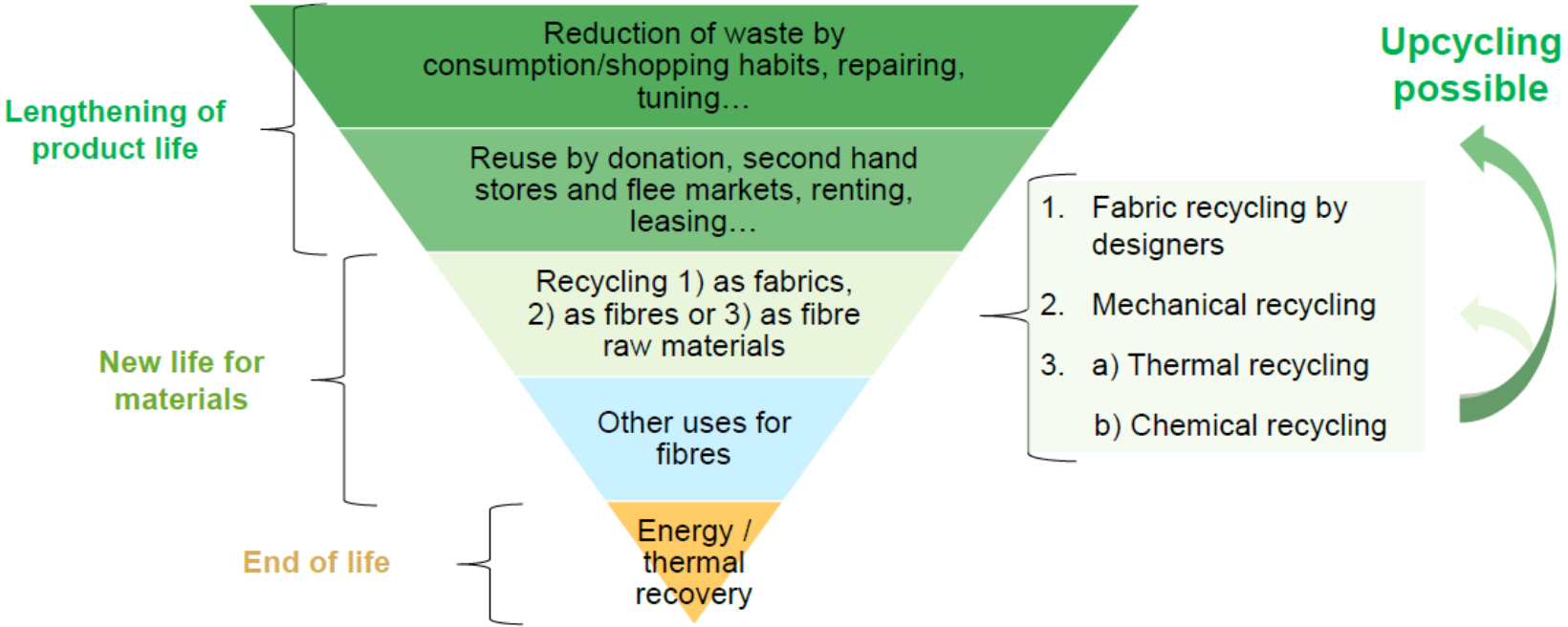

Heikkilä, P. (2018), p.10

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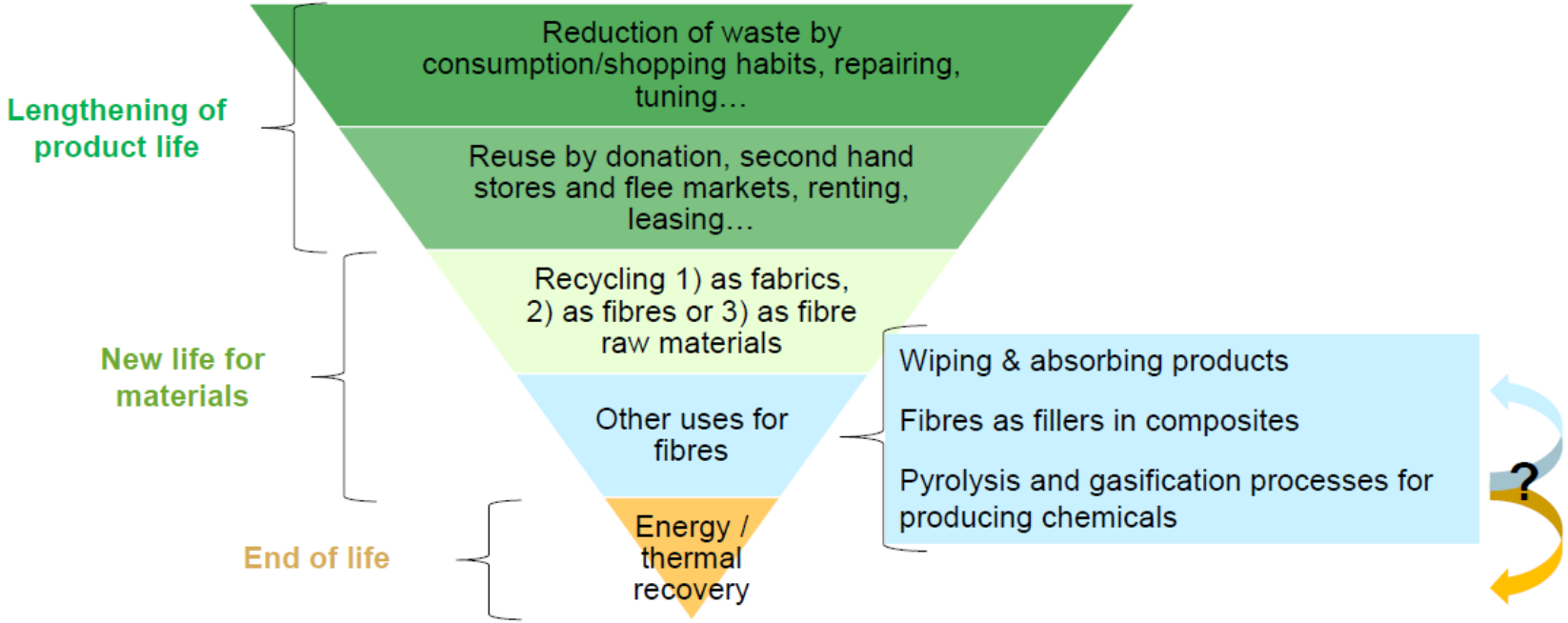
Adopted Waste Hierarchy and Textiles



Heikkilä, P. (2018), p.11

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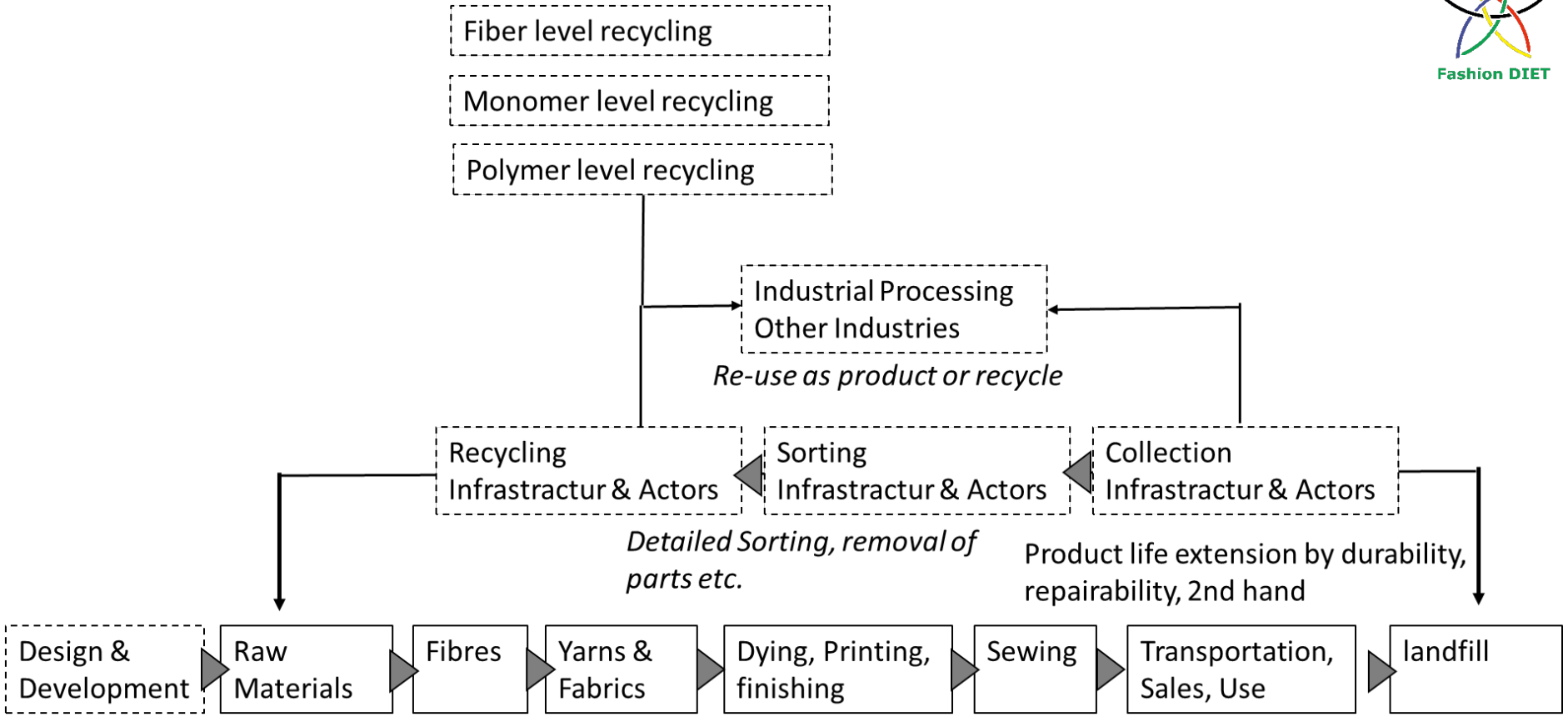

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Towards Circular Economy

- Textile reuse loops should be strengthened

  → business opportunities for forerunner companies
- Brands are interested in more sustainable/recycled materials, but supply still limited
- Rising consumer awareness helps in creation and increase of markets
- Multidisciplinary skills needed: digitalization and service based business models essential

Heikkilä, P. (2018), p.20

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Towards Circular Economy

- Missing pieces of the value chain needs to be developed: Collecting system; sorting system; Upscaling of recycling technologies
- Regulation needs to be updated (waste, chemical, etc.)
- Public incentives and financial support could fasten transition to circular economy, and the building of new ecosystems

Heikkilä, P. (2018), p.20

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Contact

Prof. Dr. Jochen Strähle

Jochen.straehle@reutlingen-university.de

Dr. Marcus Adam

Marcus.adam@reutlingen-university.de

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