A hairpiece which is anchored with the surrounding natural hair. The hairpiece has a plurality of locking devices attached to its base. The locking devices have a first section, which is attached to the hairpiece, and a second section which is adapted to being lockingly engaged with the first section. The second section is attached to the natural hair by means which permits adjustment of the attachment between the natural hair and the second section to compensate for growth of the natural hair.

8 Claims, 13 Drawing Figures
1 METHOD OF ATTACHING A HAIRPIECE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a novel hairpiece and to a method of attaching it. More particularly, the present invention is directed to a means of securing the hairpiece to natural hair and compensating for growth of the hair.

Hairpieces, wigs and other cosmetic hairpieces have been utilized by men and women for many thousands of years. It is well documented that the people of many ancient civilizations, such as the Babylonians, the Phoenicians and the people of Carthage, used wigs and cosmetic hairpieces for affairs of state, religious ceremonies and the like. For most of recorded history, a wig or hairpiece has completely covered a person's head and was held in place by friction. The total wig and the friction fit are still the most common characteristics of the cosmetic hairpieces in use today. The total wig has several disadvantages and frequently is not required. For example, a person who is only partially bald does not need a full wig and the addition of a full wig to the individual's hair gives the person the appearance of having a skull of greater bulk than is the true situation. Moreover, the addition of the wig over the person's natural remaining hair cuts off ventilation to the scalp and causes the scalp temperature to increase, causing undesired perspiration. The friction fit is far from ideal also because it will not securely attach a hairpiece to the individual's head. Where the individual wearer is vigorously active such as during a vigorous dance, or horseback riding, or a vigorous sport, the hairpiece frequently becomes misaligned and less often, but more embarrassingly, the hairpiece is often thrown off the wearer's head. Not uncommonly, the wearer of a hairpiece loses the hairpiece while scuffling in a crowd or merely bending over. A further disadvantage of the friction fit arises from the fact that such a fit does not provide adequate ventilation for the scalp area and in warm days or during vigorous activity the wearer can become quite uncomfortable and copious amounts of perspiration can form between the scalp and the hairpiece.

In an attempt to overcome many of the disadvantages of the total wig and the friction fit, hair stylists have developed partial hairpieces which merely cover the bald areas on an individual's head and have resorted to various devices for securing the hairpieces to the head. For example hair stylists have employed adhesive materials, such as adhesive liquids and tapes to secure the hairpiece to the scalp. Such methods have not proved very satisfactory however because a piece of adhesive has been found to intensify the perspiration problem, the perspiration becomes entrapped underneath the adhesive material. Moreover, many people are sensitive to the adhesive material and develop uncomfortable and unsightly rashes in areas where the adhesive has come in contact with the skin.

A more recent innovation which has seen limited application has been the weaving of the wearer's natural hair into the hairpiece to secure it to the head. This is an expensive and time-consuming operation and it is virtually impossible for the wearer to do himself. One of the principal disadvantages of this new attachment method arises from the fact that the weave must be periodically adjusted to compensate for the growth of the natural hair. This is also an expensive and time-consuming operation and cannot be performed by the wearer. Another disadvantage of this method arises from the fact that the hairpiece cannot be readily removed from the head once the weaving operation has been completed. Although the above attachment method has many disadvantages, it is by far one of the better methods for cosmetically attaching a partial hairpiece. This method provides for the attachment of the hairpiece which prevents the misalignment or removal of the hairpiece during almost all types of activity, including swimming, and provides an excellent method for cosmetically blending the hairpiece and the natural hair.

2 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a hairpiece having a hair-bearing top portion and a base portion, and a plurality of locking devices having two sections which are adapted to engage each other in a locking manner. The first section of each of said devices is secured to the base portion of the hairpiece at predetermined positions. The second section of each of the devices has a fastener ferrule with a central bore and a fastener male portion adapted to be lockingly engaged in the central bore. This novel hairpiece is attached to the head by passing strands of natural hair from hair surrounding the bald area which is to be covered, at the predetermined positions, through the central bore of each of the ferrules so that each of the second sections of the locking devices are secured to the partially bald area at predetermined positions which are juxtaposed with the positions of the first sections secured to the hairpiece. Fastener male portions are then inserted or engaged in each of the central bores by the ferrules so as to lock the strands of hair in each ferrule. The first section of each of the devices is then engaged to corresponding second sections so that the hairpiece is cosmetically aligned and covers the bald portion. From time to time, the fastener male portion can be disengaged from the central bore of the ferrules and the strands of hair therein can be pulled through to compensate for the growth of the natural hair and maintain sections approximate to the scalp. The male portion is then re-engaged in the central bore of the ferrule to lock the hair therein and provide a relatively close fit of the hairpiece to the scalp.

It is the object of the present invention to provide a means of securely attaching a partial hairpiece on an animal, particularly on man, to cosmetically cover a portion thereof. More particularly, it is an object to provide a means of securing a partial hairpiece which will allow the wearer to participate in vigorous activities, water sports and the like without fear of having the hairpiece becoming misaligned or thrown off.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a means of securing a hairpiece which can be easily performed with a minimum number of man hours and which can be readily maintained and adjusted. More particularly it is an object to provide a means of securing a hairpiece which permits the wearer to readily remove or substitute the hairpiece.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a means of securing the hairpiece without the necessity of employing adhesive materials, surgical insertions and the like.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a partially bald individual; FIG. 2 is a sectional perspective view of the first step of the method of the present invention; FIG. 3 is a sectional perspective view of the second step of the method of the present invention; FIG. 4 is a sectional perspective view of the third step of the method of the present invention; FIG. 5 is a sectional perspective view showing a later sequence of the third step of the method of the present invention; FIG. 6 is a sectional perspective view of the fourth step of the present invention; FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of a portion of the locking device of the present invention taken along lines 7-7 of FIG. 6; FIG. 8 is a sectional perspective view of the fifth step of the method of the present invention; FIG. 9 is a sectional perspective view of a later sequence of the fifth step of the method of the present invention; FIG. 10 is a cross-sectional view of a portion of the locking device of the present invention taken along line 10-10 of FIG. 9; FIG. 11 is a sectional perspective view of the sixth step of the present invention; FIG. 12 is a perspective view of a later sequence of step six as shown in FIG. 11; and
After the loop has been pulled through the central bore of the ferrule 26 the free end of the twisted strand 23 is completely pulled through the central bore eliminating the loop 24. The second section 27 is then pushed down upon the scalp and strand 23 is snugly pulled in a direction away from the scalp. A sealant 30 is then applied to the central bore of the ferrule 26 to seal the strand 23 into the ferrule. The sealant is applied with a dropper 31, such as a medicine dropper or a hypodermic instrument or a small brush. Typical sealants that are employed in this operation include spirit gum. The position of the second section 27 with respect to the scalp 11 is shown in FIG. 7. The natural hair 33 growing out of the scalp 11 is twisted into strand 23 which extends through the central bore of the ferrule 26. The strand is sealed into the ferrule with sealant 30 which is applied by instrument 31 (as is shown by dotted lines). The second section is comprised of a flexible or resilient base 34 from which extend upwardly or outwardly a plurality of resilient bars or hooks 35. In the locking device illustrated these bars lockingly engage a raised pile (not shown) on the first section 22.

After the application of the sealant, the hair strand 23 is locked in place in the ferrule by inserting a fastener male portion 36 into the central bore of the ferrule (see FIGS. 8 and 9). The fastener male portion 36 is adapted to be lockingly engaged in the central bore of the ferrule. A resilient or flexible tab, such as a cloth tab, is attached to the fastener male portion 36 so that the male portion can be easily grasped or held to remove or disengage it from the ferrule. The locking engagement of the male portion and the ferrule is illustrated in FIG. 10. The upper end of the inner wall 39 of the ferrule which surrounds the central bore extend upwardly and inwardly and are resilient so that they can be pushed outwardly for the insertion or removal of the male portion. The male portion has a male lug 40, which has an outwardly expanding outer end, and which lockingly engages the upper end of the inner wall in the presence of the hair strand 23.

The first section of the locking device is positioned with the second section 27 for cosmetic alignment of the hairpiece, and the upturned periphery of the hairpiece is folded downward to lockingly engage the first section with the second section (see FIGS. 11 and 12). The outer portion of the hairpiece adjacent the position of the first section 22 is then pressed inwardly toward the skull to insure secure engagement of the two sections (see FIG. 12). The hairpiece and the natural hair section 13 of the scalp are then combed and brushed and trimmed to provide cosmetic alignment. The hairpiece is made large enough to overlap the demarcation line 17 and the second sections attached to the scalp surrounding the bald portion that is being cosmetically covered.

Referring to FIG. 13, the locking device is comprised of the first section 22 and the second section 27. The first section has a flexible resilient base section 42 and a raised pile 43 extending downwardly therefrom. The bars or hooks 35 of the second section lockingly engage the pile 43. The base 42 is secured to the lower surface of the foundation material or base 44 of the hairpiece 20. A detailed description of such a locking device is found in G. de Mestral, U.S. Pat. No. 2,717,437.

The hairpiece is readily removed by lifting up the periphery of the hairpiece adjacent the location of the first section of the locking device, and gently pulling the first and second sections of the locking device apart. The hairpiece is then simply removed from the head. This allows ready removal, adjustment or substitution of hairpieces.

Although a preferred embodiment of the present invention has been described in detail for purposes of illustration, it is to be understood that the present invention is in no way intended to be limited to the embodiment of the invention described above. For example, instead of being separated, the first and second sections of the locking device can be secured together in a hinging relationship in order to provide maximum alignment of the hairpiece to the scalp following the period of adjustment of the second section. Furthermore, other means,
besides the raised pile and engaging barbs, can be employed to secure the first section of the locking device to the second section. For example, one section can be a magnetic material and the other section can be a material attracted to the magnetic section, or one section can have a series of grooves or holes having resilient walls which will lockingly receive opposing ridges or protrusions from the other section. It is also to be understood that the present invention is not limited to hairpieces for the head or to means of attaching hairpieces to the head. For example, the present method can be employed for beard hairpieces, mustache hairpieces and the like. While the specific embodiment described is a partial hairpiece for a partially bald scalp, the invention, is, of course, equally applicable to full hairpieces and is not limited to a bald or partially bald scalp.

We claim as our invention:

1. A method of attaching a hairpiece having a hair-bearing top portion and a base portion, and a plurality of locking devices having two sections which are adapted to engage each other in a locking relationship, the first section of each of said devices being secured to the base portion of said hairpiece at predetermined positions, the second section of each of said devices having a fastener with a bore and a separable male portion adapted to being lockingly engaged in said bore of said fastener, the method comprising:

passing bundles of natural hair at locations underlying the first sections of each of said locking devices through the bore of the fasteners so that each second section is secured closely to the scalp and positioned directly under one of the first sections;

engaging a separate male portion into the bore of each of said fasteners so as to secure the second section on one of the bundles of natural hair; and

lockingly engaging each of the first sections with separate underlying sections so that said hairpiece is secured and in cosmetic alignment.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein one section of said locking device has a base piece and a raised filament pile extending outwardly therefrom, and the other section has a base element and attachment elements extending outwardly therefrom, said attachment elements adapted to being lockingly engaged in said raised pile.

3. The method according to claim 2 wherein the first section has the base piece and the raised filament pile, the base piece being secured to the base portion of said hairpiece; and the second section has the base element and the attachment elements, said base element facing the scalp.

4. The method according to claim 1 including the additional step of sealing the bundle of natural hair in the central bore of the fastener of each of the second sections with a sealant prior to engaging a male portion into the bore.

5. The method according to claim 1 wherein each bundle of hair is twisted to form single strands of hair prior to passing the hair through the bores of said fasteners.

6. The method according to claim 1 wherein each bundle of hair is twisted to form single strands of hair, and each of said strands is folded to prepare a single loop, each of said loops being passed through the bore of a separate fastener.

7. A method according to claim 1 including the additional steps of twisting each bundle of hair to form a single strand of hair; each of said strands is folded to prepare a loop which is passed through the bore of a separate fastener; and thereafter the free end of each of said loop strands is pulled through the bore of the fastener prior to engaging a male portion into the bore.

8. A method of attaching a hairpiece having a hair-bearing top portion and a base portion, and a plurality of locking devices having two sections which are adapted to engage each other in a locking relationship, the first section of each of said devices being secured to the base portion of said hairpiece at predetermined positions, the second section of each of said devices having a fastener with a bore and a separable male portion adapted to being lockingly engaged in the bore, the method comprising the following steps:

selecting bundles of hair at locations underlying the first sections of each of said locking devices and twisting the bundle to form a single strand of hair;

folding each strand of hair to form a loop which is passed through the bore of each of the fasteners of the second sections so that each second section is secured closely to the scalp and positioned directly under separate first sections;

pulling the free end of each of the looped strands of hair through the central bores and sealing the strand of hair in the central bore with a sealant;

engaging a fastener male portion into the bore of each of said fasteners so as to secure the second sections on the strands of hair; and

engaging each of the first sections with a separate underlying second section.

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