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(54) **Method for affixing a braid to natural hair**

(57) Disclosed is a method for affixing a braid to natural hair, in which the braid is prepared by holding parts thereof together and applying a type of glue thereto, after which the glue is allowed to dry at least partially and the braid is subsequently affixed to the hair with the same type of glue.

The method is suitable for the consumer market and can be used without any risk by the general public, without the use of professional hairdressing appliances being required. Braids of various colours can be packaged, together with glue, in an attractive over-the-counter unit.

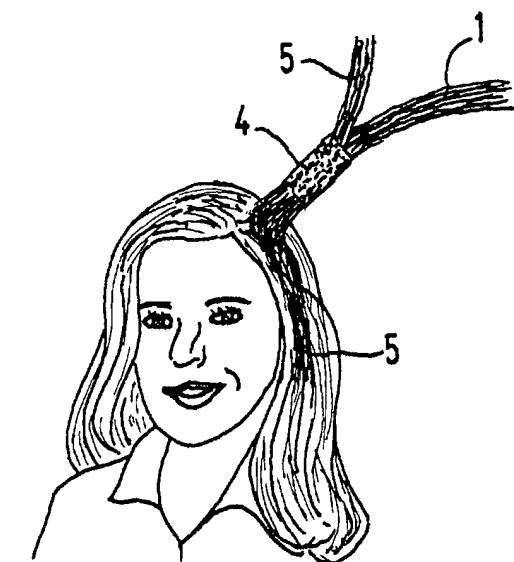


FIG. 4

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a method for affixing a braid to natural hair, in which the braid is prepared by holding parts thereof together and applying a type of glue thereto, after which the glue is allowed to dry at least partially and the braid is subsequently affixed to the hair.

[0002] The present invention furthermore relates to a unit for carrying out this method.

[0003] Such a method is generally known. Professional hair-dressers generally use heat tongs to be connected to the electricity grid which are specially intended for that purpose, by means of which tongs a plait or braid is fixed to a tuft of hair on a client's scalp. Professional hair-dressers also use adhesive strips, shrinking means of projections to be fixed to a person's scalp, to which the braid is attached. One drawback of these known methods is the fact that they do not provide an alternative for the home market, for example of youthful persons who are unwilling or unable to visit a hairdresser each time they want to add a braid or an adornment to their natural hair.

[0004] A method of the above kind such as defined in the preamble of claim 1 is known from US patent no. 5,868,145. Said known method comprises the application of liquid latex to the braid, which latex is dried. Then SuperGlue with a base of cyanoacrylate is applied to the braid with the dried latex. Said SuperGlue is allowed to dry for one hour. Following that, the junction between the braid and the hair is coated with acrylic thermosetting adhesive, which is allowed to harden while heat is being supplied by heat supplying means. The bundles thus affixed are removed by means of acetone.

[0005] One drawback of the method that is known from said patent is the fact that in view of the large number of processing steps to be carried out with different types of materials, the method is complex and relatively costly and that it takes up at least an hour and that, in addition, it is not suitable for the home market, for example, where children will want to use it, in view of the long period of time before the result shows, and also in view of the risks involved in the use of SuperGlue, heat supplying means and acetone upon removal of the braid from the hair.

[0006] Consequently, it is the object of the present invention to provide a simple method for affixing a braid to natural hair which can also be used without risk by children, which method and associated over-the-counter unit are also suitable for the home market.

[0007] In order to accomplish that objective, the method according to the invention is characterized in that the braid is affixed to the hair by means of the same type of glue, which is also safe for use by children.

The advantage of the method according to the invention is the fact that only one type of glue, which is also safe for use by children, needs to be purchased, and that the glue can be easily applied by the person in question him-

self or herself, whilst a professionally looking end result is nevertheless obtained. The glue is a substance which can be applied without any risk, which will retain its adhesive power for some time and which can be removed from the hair after some time. Insofar as the type of glue allows this, the glue can be removed from the hair in a simple and safe manner, for example by washing with water, or, insofar as the glue is a glue with a base of latex, by means of a common, skin-friendly natural oil. After said removal, the natural hair will regain the natural look it had before the method was used; it is not affected by the use of the method according to the invention. In addition, no relatively costly, electrically powered professional heat supplying means are required for carrying out the method. Another advantage is the fact that in principle it is possible to reuse the braids themselves as well, since they are not affected by the method or by the glue.

[0008] One embodiment of the method according to the invention which is safe, effective and economical as regards the use of glue, is characterized in that the braid is affixed to the hair by means of the at least partially dried glue without any heat being supplied while the braid is being affixed.

[0009] Another embodiment of the method according to the invention, by means of which a very firm connection between the braid and the hair is effected, is characterized in that the braid is affixed to the hair by twining it into a tuft of hair or intertwining it therewith.

[0010] Other possible embodiments of the method according to the invention are characterized in that the same type of glue is applied to a contact area of the at least partially dried braid and the tuft of hair prior to, during or after said twining. Finally, the respective processing steps of the method according to the invention are used advantageously with one and the same type of glue.

[0011] Another embodiment of the method according to the invention is characterized in that said drying of the glue and/or the additional glue takes place while heat is being supplied.

[0012] Although a heat source may be used during said drying step, said heat source can be a known common hair-drier which is present in every household, which has this advantage that the glue will dry more quickly and that the method can take place within an even shorter period of time and at relatively low risk. In addition to this, several types of glue, among which heat-sensitive types of glue, may be used if heat is supplied.

[0013] Yet another embodiment of the method according to the invention is characterized in that a hair clip or a hairpin is used for holding the parts together. Irrespective of the fact whether heat is supplied or not, the glue-coated braid can be allowed to dry for some time whilst being held together in a simple manner by means of said hair clip or hairpin. The whole can be placed on a table, for example, without the glue-coated

part touching and soiling the table and glue being wasted.

[0014] A unit according to the invention which is suitable for carrying out the method and being marketed as an over-the-counter unit, is characterized in that said unit comprises glue as well as one or more braids, a hair clip or a hairpin contained in one and the same package. If desired, a skin-friendly, usually natural oil can be added to said package in a suitable container, so that the glue, especially glue with a base of latex, can be easily removed from the hair by means of said oil. Examples of suitable, advantageous and generally available oils are: natural oils containing skin care oil, kitchen oil and/or salad oil, or a natural, skin-friendly oil which is contained in an ointment.

[0015] In order to enhance the appeal of the unit, one embodiment of the unit according to the invention is characterized in that the braids comprise various colours or combinations of colours.

[0016] The present invention and its further advantages will now be explained in more detail with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which corresponding parts are indicated by the same numerals in the various figures. In the drawing:

Figs. 1 - 4 successively show possible steps of the method according to the invention.

[0017] In Fig. 1, part of a braid 1 is dipped in a jar 2 which is filled with a glue 3. Generally, glue 3 will be applied to at least one end 4 of the braid 1. For example, about 1 cm of the end 4 of the braid 1 is coated with glue. After the end has been allowed to dry for some time, the braid 1 can be affixed to the hair 5 (see Fig. 4). The braid 1 may be held for some time, and the drying process may be accelerated by using a hair-drier.

[0018] Fig. 2 shows a possible method step, which employs a hairpin 6 or hair clip, in which a part G of the braid not coated with glue is clamped down, which hairpin or hair clip can be placed on a table 7, for example, together with the braid 1 itself so as to allow the braid to dry for some time. The coated part 4 does not come into contact with the table 7, and the supporting surface is not soiled with glue. The drying time is about fifteen minutes. If a hair-drier or a fan is used, the drying time will be about three minutes/

[0019] Fig. 3 shows how the end 4 of the braid 1 can be held between a person's thumbs and index fingers so as to stretch, flatten and/or model the end 4 slightly. Fig. 4 shows how a tuft of hair 5 is selected and the coated braid end 4 is contacted therewith. Fig. 4 also shows how a flattened end 4 is placed or rolled around the tuft of hair 5 or can be intertwined therewith. If desired, additional glue can for example be applied to a contact area of the at least partially dried braid end 4 and the tuft of hair 5 prior to, during or after said twining, depending on the type of braid 1, the material of which it is made or the weight thereof. The glue may be more or less heat

sensitive, be water-soluble, for example, and be transparent or coloured, whilst different braids 1 may have different colours.

[0020] A package to be sold as an over-the-counter unit may contain one or more types of glue, one or more braids 1 and one or more hairpins 6 or hair clips. Furthermore it is possible to make refill packages containing glue and, preferably, braids of various colours can be made available to the consumer. The braids or strings 1 may comprise artificial hair, natural hair, ribbons, beads and other types of ornaments.

Claims

1. A method for affixing a braid to natural hair, in which the braid is prepared by holding parts thereof together and applying a type of glue thereto, after which the glue is allowed to dry at least partially and the braid is subsequently affixed to the hair, **characterized in that** the braid is affixed to the hair by means of the same type of glue, which is also safe for use by children.
2. A method according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the braid is affixed to the hair by means of the at least partially dried glue without any heat being supplied while the braid is being affixed.
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** the braid is affixed to the hair by twining it into a tuft of hair or intertwining it therewith.
4. A method according to claim 3, **characterized in that** the same type of glue is applied to a contact area of the at least partially dried braid and the tuft of hair prior to, during or after said twining.
5. A method according to any one of the claims 1 - 4, **characterized in that** said drying of glue takes place while heat is being supplied.
6. A method according to claim 5, **characterized in that** a hair-drier is used for supplying heat during said drying of the glue.
7. A method according to any one of the claims 1 - 6, **characterized in that** a hair clip or a hairpin is used for holding the parts of the braid together.
8. A method according to claim 7, **characterized in that** said at least partial drying of the parts of the braid takes place while the hairpin or hair clip holds said parts together.
9. A method according to any one of the claims 7 or 8, **characterized in that** the parts of the braid being held together by the hairpin or hair clip are the ends

of the braid.

10. A unit suitable for using the method according to any one of the claims 1 - 9, **characterized in that** the unit comprises glue, one or more braids and a hairpin or hair clip contained in one and the same package. 5
11. A unit according to claim 10, **characterized in that** said braids comprise various colours or combinations of colours. 10
12. A method and/or a unit according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said glue is a glue with a base of latex. 15
13. A method and/or a unit according to claim 12, **characterized in that** the method employs a natural, skin-friendly oil for removing the glue with a base of latex and/or **in that** the unit comprises a natural, skin-friendly oil. 20
14. A method and/or a unit according to claim 13, **characterized in that** said natural, skin-friendly oil contains skin care oil, kitchen oil and/or salad oil, or a natural, skin-friendly oil which is contained in an ointment. 25

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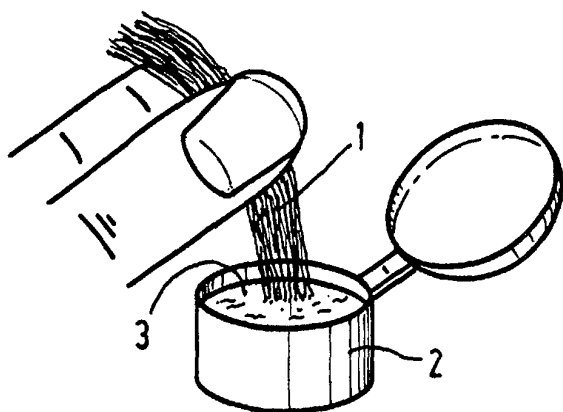


FIG. 1

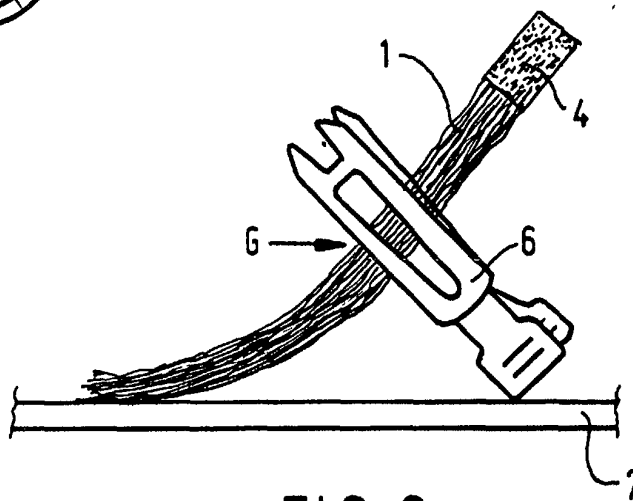


FIG. 2

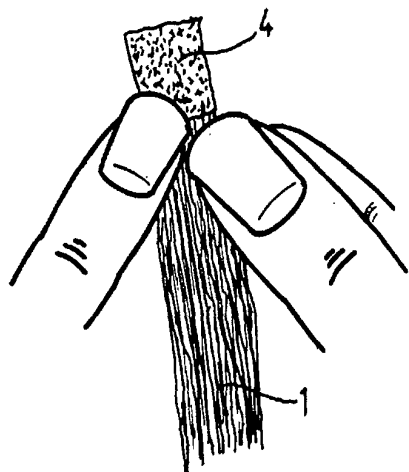


FIG. 3

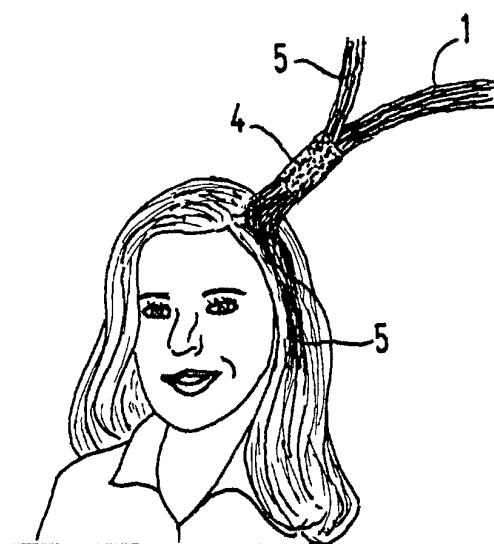


FIG. 4



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 02 07 5024

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
A	US 5 082 010 A (SKARYD PETER ET AL) 21 January 1992 (1992-01-21) * column 1, line 60 - column 2, line 5 * * column 2, line 38 - line 48 * * column 2, line 59 - line 61; claim 1 *	1,3,9	A41G3/00
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 11 April 2002	Examiner Monné, E
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

EPO FORM 1503 03/82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 02 07 5024

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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11-04-2002

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