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DESCRIPTION

MULTILAYER-COATED POWDER



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TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a multilayer-coated powder and a pigment, material for a cosmetic, and powder for use in an electrorheological fluid each comprising the multilayer-coated powder. More particularly, this invention relates to a pigment powder for use in a color ink and as a filler for plastics/papers; a material for color cosmetics which comprises a lightweight powder; and a powder for use in an electrorheological fluid having excellent voltage responsiveness which can rapidly and reversibly change its apparent viscosity by the action of applied voltage (on/off, voltage change), can change into even a gel state showing no flowability, and is thought to be used in applications, such as clutches, valves, dampers, brakes, shock absorbers, and actuators. The present invention furthermore relates to a powder whose electrorheological properties are utilized and which is usable as marker particles for examining the flowing state of a fluid based on the properties of the powder,

e.g., as a tracer for determining a flowing state by the laser Doppler method.

BACKGROUND ART

The present inventors previously invented a powder comprising a base particle of a metal or metal compound and having thereon a metal oxide film which has an even thickness from 0.01 to 20 μm and in which the metal contained therein is different from the metal constituting the base particle in order to provide a powder which combines properties inherent only in the metal particle or metal compound particle with other properties so as to have a combination of functions (Unexamined Published Japanese Patent Application No. 6-228604). The present inventors further improved the above powder and invented a powder comprising a base particle having not a single layer of a metal oxide but plural layers of a metal oxide film and a metal film alternatively (Unexamined Published Japanese Patent Application No. 7-90310).

For producing these powders, it is necessary to form plural metal oxide films each having an even thickness over a base particle. Since it is difficult to deposit a metal oxide or a metal compound as a precursor therefrom an aqueous metal salt solution, the

present inventors developed a method which comprises dispersing the base particle into a metal alkoxide solution and hydrolyzing the metal alkoxide to thereby form a metal oxide film on the base particle. Due to this method, it has become possible to form a thin metal oxide film which is even in thickness and, in particular, the formation of a multilayered metal oxide film has become possible.

Attempts were made to use these multilayer-coated powders as powders combining properties inherent only in given a base particle with other properties so as to have a combination of functions, mainly in applications, such as pigments, materials for cosmetics, and powders for use in electrorheological fluids.

In connection with the powders for use in electrorheological fluids (ERF), it is noted that an electrorheological fluid, which is called also an electroviscous fluid or electroresponsive fluid, is a functional fluid which usually is in a liquid state showing flowability but which, upon application of a high voltage, undergoes a considerable viscosity increase and can finally change into a gel state showing no flowability.

Proposed so far as such fluids are a certain kind of polymer solution and suspensions of various particles.

However, the former fluid does not sufficiently perform functions of an electrorheological fluid because the viscosity increase thereof with increasing applied voltage is small. Investigations have hence been made mainly on the latter fluids of the particle dispersion type. This is because ERFs of the particle dispersion type show a relatively satisfactory viscosity increase with increasing applied voltage (Winslow effect) as compared with the polymer solution type.

Incidentally, the particulate materials which have been known as particles to be dispersed into oily media to prepare electrorheological fluids include inorganic and organic substances, such as silica, ion-exchange resins, barium titanate, hydrous phenolic resins, crystalline zeolites, cellulose, starch, and soybean casein (Examined Japanese Patent Publication No. 45-10048, Unexamined Published Japanese Patent Application No. 48-17806, Examined Japanese Patent Publication No. 58-32197, Unexamined Published Japanese Patent Applications Nos. 58-179259, 63-185812, and 4-89893, etc.)

Furthermore, since inorganic substances have a high ERF effect and polymer particles have satisfactory dispersibility, it has been proposed to deposit fine particles of an inorganic substance on the surface of

polymer particles to form an inorganic/organic composite two-layer structure to thereby give a powder for use in an electrorheological fluid (Gekkan Tribology, Aug. 1994 issue, p.24).

However, for use in inks, the powders comprising a metal or metal compound as a base have a problem that the powder particles are apt to precipitate in the liquid before use because of their large specific gravity and are difficult to disperse evenly. For use as a powder for inks, a filler for plastics, and the like, the powders should be colored. However, since use of a mechanochemical method results in pulverization of the pigment itself and, hence, in a reduced pigment particle diameter and a lighter color, it is necessary to use a dye or the like to color the powders. There also is a problem that when the powders are used as a filler for plastics and subjected to kneading so as to be dispersed into a resin, then powder particles separate from the shells formed by a mechanochemical method and this may result in a color change.

With respect to materials for cosmetics, in particular, materials for emulsion-form cosmetics, there is a problem that the powders are difficult to use. In the case of a powder obtained by depositing particles of titanium oxide or the like on the particle surfaces of,

for example, a resin powder, there is a problem that powder particles separate from the surface coating shells during use to cause a color change.

Furthermore, the inorganic/organic composite type powder for ERFs, among the prior art techniques described above, has the following problem because of its characteristic structure, which comprises polymer particles (cores) having satisfactory dispersibility and fine particles of an inorganic substance deposited on the surface of each polymer particle. Namely, in a powder obtained by depositing fine particles of titanium oxide or the like on the surface of each resin powder particle, there are cases where powder particles covering the resin powder particles separate from the resin particles during operation.

In order that particles for use in electrorheological fluids be used as a powder for color printer inks, color displays, or the like, the particles should be colored. However, none of the conventional electrorheological fluids has not been colored. If a colored electrorheological fluid is obtained, it can be used in printers, such as Hertz type printers (see C.H. Hertz et al., Agui Takeshi et al., "Real Color Hard Copy", Sangyo Tosho K.K., published on Oct. 8, 1993, p.56).

Consequently, an object of the present invention is to eliminate these problems and provide: a pigment powder of a stable color tone which comprises a lightweight base particle and is capable of being colored without using a dye or pigment and with which not only a pigment for monochromatic color inks, e.g., blue, green, or yellow inks, can be obtained by dispersing the pigment powder into a fluid, but also a filler for plastics/papers can be designed; a material for color cosmetics which is a powder with which monochromatic colored powders, such as mascaras or eyebrow pencils, can be designed and which is capable of absorbing ultraviolet and infrared rays harmful to the skin; and a lightweight powder which, when dispersed into a fluid, can give a material for an electrorheological fluid, in particular, a colored powder capable of giving a material for a colored fluid.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

The present inventors made intensive studies. As a result, they have found that a powder colored in a stable tone, such as blue, green, or yellow, can be obtained without a dye or a pigment by forming a thin film comprising plural layers differing in refractive index on the surface of a powder to regulate the

multilayered film with respect to reflected-light interference waveform. The present invention has thus been completed.

Specifically, the present invention can be achieved by the following means:

- (1) A multilayer-coated powder comprising a base particle having a specific gravity of 0.1 to 10.5 and having thereon plural coating layers which are different from each other in refractive index;
- (2) The multilayer-coated powder according to the above (1), wherein at least one of the coating layers is an inorganic metal compound layer;
- (3) The multilayer-coated powder according to the above (2), wherein the inorganic metal compound layer is a metal oxide film layer;
- (4) The multilayer-coated powder according to the above (1), wherein at least one of the coating layers is a metal layer or an alloy layer;
- (5) The multilayer-coated powder according to the above (1), wherein at least one of the coating layers is an organic layer;
- (6) A pigment powder, comprising the multilayer-coated powder according to any one of the above (1) to (5);

(7) A material for a cosmetic, comprising the multilayer-coated powder according to any one of the above (1) to (5); and

(8) A powder for an electrorheological fluid, comprising the multilayer-coated powder according to any one of the above (1) to (5).

In the present invention, the base particle having a specific gravity from 0.1 to 10.5, which constitutes the base of the multilayer-coated powder, is not particularly limited and may be made of either an organic or an inorganic substance. The specific gravity of this base is preferably from 0.1 to 5.5, more preferably from 0.1 to 2.8, from the standpoints of flowability and suspensibility. If the base has a specific gravity below 0.1, the buoyancy of the base is so large that the film should be made to comprise a larger number of layers or to be exceedingly thick, which is uneconomical. On the other hand, if the base has a specific gravity exceeding 10.5, a thick film for suspending the base is necessary, which also is uneconomical. In addition, in the case of cosmetics and the like, such a powder having too large a particle diameter is unsuitable because it gives a sandy feeling.

For use in a pigment powder or a powder as a material for cosmetics, the base is preferably an

inorganic substance because it is not influenced by the heat of burning in the step of coating film formation which will be described later. On the other hand, for use in a powder for electrorheological fluids, the base is preferably an organic substance, e.g., resin particles, from the standpoint of dispersibility into liquids.

Examples of the resin particles include cellulose powders, cellulose acetate powders, and spherical or pulverized particles obtained from polyamides, epoxy resins, polyesters, melamine resins, polyurethanes, vinyl acetate resins, and silicone resins or obtained by the polymerization or copolymerization of acrylic esters, methacrylic esters, styrene, ethylene, propylene, and derivatives thereof. Especially preferred resin particles are spherical acrylic resin particles obtained by the polymerization of acrylic acid or a methacrylic ester.

Usable as the inorganic substance are inorganic hollow particles, such as Shirasu balloons (hollow silicic acid particles), fine hollow carbon particles (Kureca Sphere), fused alumina bubbles, aerosil, white carbon, fine hollow silica spheres, fine hollow calcium carbonate spheres, calcium carbonate, pearlite, talc,

bentonite, micas, such as synthetic micas and common mica, kaolin, and the like.

In the multilayer-coated powder of the present invention, the plural coating layers formed on each base particle having a specific gravity from 0.1 to 10.5 should be different from each other in refractive index. The materials constituting these coating layers are desirably selected suitably from inorganic metal compounds, metals, alloys, and organic substances.

These coating layers each is formed as a dense and continuous film, whereby they can have excellent properties.

Typical examples of the inorganic metal compounds which may constitute the coating layers include metal oxides. Specific examples thereof include the oxides of iron, nickel, chromium, titanium, aluminum, silicon, calcium, magnesium, and barium and composite oxides of these metals, such as barium titanate and lead titanate. Examples of the metal compounds other than metal oxides include metal fluorides, such as magnesium fluoride and calcium fluoride; metal nitrides, such as iron nitride; metal sulfides, such as zinc sulfide and cadmium sulfide; metal carbonates, such as calcium carbonate; metal phosphates, such as calcium phosphate; and metal

carbides. In particular, silica or the like enables the multilayer-coated powder to have satisfactory properties.

Examples of the elemental metals which may constitute the coating layers include silver metal, cobalt metal, nickel metal, and iron metal. Examples of the metal alloys include iron-nickel alloys, iron-cobalt alloys, iron-nickel alloy nitrides, and iron-nickel-cobalt alloy nitrides.

The organic substances which may constitute the coating layers may be the same as or different from the aforementioned organic substances usable for constituting the base, and are not particularly limited. However, resins are preferred. Examples of the resins include cellulose, cellulose acetate, polyamides, epoxy resins, polyesters, melamine resins, polyurethanes, vinyl acetate resins, silicone resins, and polymers or copolymers of acrylic esters, methacrylic esters, styrene, ethylene, propylene, and derivatives thereof.

Although various materials can be used to constitute the coating layers as described above, a suitable combination of materials should be selected according to the kind of a pigment or coating material, purposes, the substance to be coated, etc., while taking account of the refractive index of each coating layer.

If the powder is for use as a material for cosmetics, the coating layer as the outermost layer should, of course, be constituted of a material which is inert to the living body or which at least does not adversely influence the living body. Typical examples of such materials include titanium dioxide.

Titanium dioxide is thought to be effective also because it has the property of specifically absorbing ultraviolet waves. By using a metal film and a titanium oxide film and suitably regulating their film thicknesses, a powder having a high reflectance throughout the whole infrared region can be obtained and a UV- and IR-cutting cosmetic can be prepared therefrom.

If the coating layers contain one or more organic substance layers, the other layers each is preferably a metal oxide film.

In the present invention, the organic powder to be coated may have any particle shape. Although particles of irregular shapes, such as pulverized particles, can be coated and colored, spherical particles are especially preferred.

The particle diameter of the multilayer-coated powder of the present invention is not particularly limited, and can be suitably regulated according to purposes. However, the particle diameter thereof is

generally in the range from 0.01 μm to several millimeters. If the powder is to be used for coloring as a coloring material based on visible light interference, the particle diameter thereof is preferably regulated to 0.06 to 1,000 μm .

If the multilayer-coated powder is used in an electrorheological fluid, the liquid medium is not particularly limited as long as it is an insulating medium and is a high-boiling substance which is liquid under use conditions and has electrical insulating properties. Examples of commonly used liquid media include petroleum lubricants, transformer oils, silicone oils, dibutyl sebacate, chlorinated paraffins, brominated alkyls, alkyl esters of aromatic polycarboxylic acids, halophenyl alkyl ethers, and fluorochemical oils.

The amount of the powder added to the insulating medium is from 10 to 50% by volume. If the addition amount thereof is smaller than 10% by volume, the resultant mixture shows too small a viscosity change with changing applied voltage and has insufficient electrorheological fluid properties. Amounts thereof exceeding 50% by volume are undesirable in that the resultant mixture has too high a viscosity in the

ordinary state where no voltage is applied, and shows a thixotropic behavior.

The unit coating layers constituting the plural coating layers are preferably ones whose thicknesses have been determined so that these layers have interference reflection peaks or interference transmission bottoms at the same specific wavelength. More preferably, the thickness of each unit of the coating layer is determined by fixing a fundamental film thickness thereof which satisfies the following equation (1):

$$N \times d = m \times \lambda/4 \quad (1)$$

(wherein N represents a complex refractive index, d represents the fundamental film thickness, m represents an integer (natural number), and λ represents the wavelength at which the interference reflection peak or interference transmission peak appears, and N is defined by the following equation (2):

$$N = n + ik \quad (2)$$

(wherein n represents the refractive index of each unit coating layer, i represents complex number, and k represents extinction coefficient)), and correcting the actual thickness of the each unit of the coating layers based on the function of the phase shift caused by the extinction coefficient k of refractive index, the phase

shift occurring at film interfaces, and the peak shift attributable to refractive index dispersion and particle shape so that the each unit of the coating layers has an interference reflection peak or an interference transmission bottom at the same specific wavelength as shown above.

For forming these films, the following methods may be used according to the substances to be deposited. However, other methods can be used.

(1) Formation of Organic Substance Film (Resin Film):

a. Polymerization in Liquid Phase

Use can be made, for example, of a method in which particles serving as a base are dispersed and emulsion polymerization is conducted to form a resin film on each particle.

b. Film Formation in Vapor Phase (CVD) (PVD)

(2) Formation of Inorganic Metal Compound Film:

a. Solid Deposition in Liquid Phase

A preferred method is to disperse particles serving as a base into a metal alkoxide solution and hydrolyze the metal alkoxide to thereby form a metal oxide film on each particle. This method can form a dense metal oxide film. It is also possible to react an aqueous solution of a metal salt to thereby form a film of a metal oxide or the like on particles.

b. Film Formation in Vapor Phase (CVD) (PVD)

(3) Formation of Metal Film or Alloy Film:

a. Reduction of Metal Salt in Liquid Phase

Use is made of the so-called chemical plating method in which the metal salt contained in an aqueous metal salt solution is reduced to deposit the metal to thereby form a metal film.

b. Film Formation in Vapor Phase (CVD) (PVD)

A metal film can be formed on the surfaces of particles, for example, by the vapor deposition of a metal.

A method for forming a multilayered film composed of layers of a metal oxide having a high refractive index and, alternately arranged therewith, layers of a metal oxide having a low refractive index is explained below in detail as an example. First, a base particle are dispersed into an alcohol solution of an alkoxide of titanium, zirconium, etc. A mixed solution comprising water, an alcohol, and a catalyst is added dropwise to the dispersion under stirring to hydrolyze the alkoxide to thereby form on the surface of each base particle a film of titanium oxide or zirconium oxide as a high-refractive-index film. Thereafter, this powder is taken out by solid/liquid separation, dried, and then subjected to a heat treatment. The drying may be

conducted by any means selected from vacuum drying with heating, vacuum drying, and natural drying. It is also possible to use an apparatus, such as a spray dryer, in an inert atmosphere while regulating the atmosphere. The heat treatment may be accomplished by heating the powder at 150 to 1100°C (when the base particle is an inorganic particle) or at 150 to 500°C (when the base particle is not an inorganic particle) for 1 minute to 3 hours either in air when the coating composition does not undergo oxidation or in an inert atmosphere when the coating composition is susceptible to oxidation. Subsequently, the particles having the high-refractive-index film formed thereon are dispersed into an alcohol solution of a metal alkoxide which gives an oxide having a low refractive index, such as a silicon alkoxide or aluminum alkoxide. A mixed solution comprising water, an alcohol, and a catalyst is added dropwise to the resultant dispersion under stirring to hydrolyze the alkoxide to thereby form over the surface of each base particle a film of silicon oxide or aluminum oxide as a low-refractive-index film. Thereafter, the powder is taken out by solid/liquid separation, vacuum-dried, and then heat-treated in the same manner as the above. As a result of the above procedure, a powder is obtained in which the base particle has, on the surface thereof, two

layers comprising a high-refractive-index metal oxide film and a low-refractive-index metal oxide film. Furthermore, the above procedure for forming metal oxide films is repeated to thereby obtain a powder in which each particle has multiple metal oxide films on its surface. Since the powder thus obtained has high-refractive-index metal oxide films alternately arranged with low-refractive-index metal oxide films as stated hereinabove, it has a high reflectance and high whiteness.

For forming a metal film on a base particle or on a metal oxide film, contact electroplating or sputtering may be used, besides the electroless plating described above. However, the contact electroplating has a drawback that powder particles not in contact with an electrode are not plated, while the sputtering has a drawback that a metal vapor is not evenly applied to the powder particles. Namely, the thickness of the coating formed by either method varies from particle to particle. In contrast, the method of film formation by electroless plating is preferred in that a dense and even film can be formed and the film thickness is easy to regulate. The metal film is preferably subjected to a heat treatment after film formation in the same manner as for the metal oxide films.

If the powder of the present invention for use in an electrorheological fluid is produced by forming a multilayered film by an above-described method in such a manner that thin metal films are formed alternately, for example, on a base particle having a small specific gravity, the coated particles obtained are thought to have enhanced polarization like multilayer capacitors. Thus, particles having a small specific gravity and large polarization are obtained.

Furthermore, since a ferroelectric can be used as an interference film for coloring, a powder having a small specific gravity and a high relative permittivity can be obtained by forming a multilayered film comprising a ferroelectric. In particular, when films of barium titanate (refractive index, 1.8-2.3) or PZT (refractive index, 1.7-2.0) are formed as high-refractive-index films to a color base particle based on visible light multiple interference with low-refractive-index films, then the coated particles are suitable for use as a powder for electrorheological color fluids.

If the particles of the powder obtained are spherical, the particles orient instantaneously in an electric field without rotating. If the powder particles have shape anisotropy, the major axes orient parallel to the direction of the electric field.

In the above-described powder of the present invention, the multilayered coating has been united as a film with the surface of each particle. When the coating is an electrical conductor, it is susceptible to polarization to have positive and negative poles according to the direction of an electric field. If the core for this coating is an insulator, the coated particle is symmetrically polarized exactly like a capacitor.

The powder of the present invention for use in an electrorheological fluid (ERF) is highly useful. When this powder is used to form an electrorheological fluid, the fluid can rapidly and reversibly change its apparent viscosity by the action of applied voltage (on/off, voltage change) and can change into even a gel state showing no flowability. Namely, an electrorheological fluid having excellent voltage responsiveness can be formed which is thought to be used in applications such as clutches, valves, dampers, brakes, shock absorbers, and actuators. Furthermore, the powder of this invention is usable as marker particles for examining the flowing state of a fluid, e.g., as a tracer for determining a flowing state by the laser Doppler method.

The present invention will be explained below in more detail by reference to the drawings. Fig. 1 is a

sectional view diagrammatically illustrating the structure of a particle of a multilayer-coated powder according to the present invention. The particle comprises a base particle 1 having a specific gravity from 0.1 to 10.5 as a nucleus and, alternately formed on the surface thereof, two coating layers 2 and two coating layers 3 differing in refractive index from the layers 2.

A special function can be imparted by regulating the thicknesses of the coating films differing in refractive index alternately formed on the surface of each base particle. For example, coating films differing in refractive index are alternately formed on each base particle so as to satisfy the following equation (1). Namely, films which each is made of a substance having a refractive index n and has a thickness d corresponding to m (integer) times the value which is one-fourth a wavelength of visible light are formed in an appropriate thickness and number. As a result, the light having a specific wavelength λ (the light utilizing Fresnel's interference reflection) is reflected or absorbed.

$$nd = m\lambda/4 \quad (1)$$

This function is utilized as follows. An oxide film having such a thickness and refractive index as to

satisfy equation (1) with respect to a target wavelength of visible light is formed on the surface of each base particle, and this film is coated with an oxide film having a different refractive index. This procedure is conducted once or repeated one or more times to thereby form films which have a characteristic reflection or absorption wavelength width in the visible light region. In the above procedure, the sequence of material deposition for film formation is determined in the following manner. When the base has a high refractive index, a film having a low refractive index is preferably formed as the first layer. In the reverse case, a film having a high refractive index is preferably formed as the first layer.

Film thickness is controlled based on a measurement in which the change of optical film thickness, which is the product of the refractive index of the film and the film thickness, is determined as reflection waveform with a spectrophotometer or the like. The thickness of each layer is designed so that the reflection waveform conforms to the finally required waveform. For example, if the unit coating films constituting a multilayered film have reflection waveform peaks at different positions as shown in Fig. 2, the powder is white. On the other hand, when the unit

coating films are regulated so that the reflection waveform peaks thereof are in exactly the same position as shown in Fig. 3, a monochromatic colored powder, e.g., a blue, green, or yellow powder, can be obtained without using a dye or pigment.

However, in the case of an actual powder, a design should be made while taking account of the particle diameter and shape of the powder, the phase shift occurring at interfaces between film materials and the base particle material, the peak shift attributable to the wavelength dependence of refractive index, etc. For example, if the base particle has a plane parallel plate shape, the Fresnel interference caused by parallel films formed on a plane surface of the particle is designed under the conditions including the above equation (1) in which n has been replaced with N defined by the following equation (2). In particular, if a metal film is contained, extinction coefficient κ is included in the refractive index N of the metal defined by equation (2) even though the particle shape is a plane parallel plate shape. In the case of transparent oxides (dielectrics), κ is exceedingly small and negligible.

$$N = n + i\kappa \quad (2)$$

(i represents a complex number)

When the extinction coefficient κ is large, an enhanced phase shift occurs at the interface between the film material and the base particle material, and this phase shift influences the optimum interference thicknesses of all layers of the multilayered film.

Because of the above, the mere regulation of geometrical film thicknesses results in different peak positions and, hence, in a lighter color especially in monochromatic coloring. In order to avoid this, a design is made beforehand through a computer simulation so as to result in an optimal combination of film thicknesses while taking account of influences of the phase shift on all films.

There also are the phase shift caused by an oxide layer present on a metal surface and the peak shift attributable to the wavelength dependence of refractive index. In order to correct these, it is necessary to use a spectrophotometer or the like to find optimal conditions under which reflection peaks or absorption bottoms appear at target wavelengths in a final target number of films.

In a film formed on a curved surface such as that of a spherical particle, interference occurs similarly to that on plane plates and is basically in accordance with Fresnel's interference principle. Consequently, a

coloring method can be designed so as to produce a white powder and a monochromatic powder as shown in Figs. 2 and 3. However, in the case of curved surfaces, the light which has struck on the powder and has been reflected causes complicated interference. The resultant interference waveforms are almost the same as on plane plates when the number of films is small. However, as the total number of films increases, the interference within the multilayered film becomes more complicated. In the case of a multilayered film also, a spectral reflection curve can be designed beforehand based on Fresnel interference through a computer simulation so as to result in an optimal combination of film thicknesses. In particular, if coating films are formed on the surface of each base particle, the influences of a phase shift on the base particle surface and on all films are taken in account when a design is made beforehand through a computer simulation so as to result in an optimal combination of film thicknesses. Furthermore, the peak shift caused by an oxide layer present on the base particle surface and the peak shift attributable to the wavelength dependence of refractive index are also taken in account. In the actual production of a sample, designed spectral curves are referred to and, in order to correct these in actual

films, it is necessary to use a spectrophotometer or the like, while changing film thicknesses, to find optimal conditions under which reflection peaks or absorption bottoms appear at target wavelengths in a final target number of films. Also if a powder having irregular particle shapes is colored, interference occurs due to the multilayered film. A basic film design is hence made with reference to conditions for an interference multilayered film for spherical particles. The peak position for each of unit coating films constituting the multilayered film can be regulated by changing the thickness of the layer, and the film thickness can be regulated by changing the solution composition, reaction time, and the number of starting-material addition times. Thus, the powder can be colored in a desired tint. As described above, white and monochromatic powders can be obtained by finding optimal conditions under which reflection peaks or absorption bottoms appear at target wavelengths in a final target number of films, while changing film-forming conditions, such as solutions for film formation. Furthermore, by controlling a combination of materials for forming a multilayered film and the thicknesses of the unit coating films, the color development by interference in the multilayered film can

be regulated. Thus, a powder can be colored in a desired bright tint without using a dye or pigment.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a sectional view diagrammatically illustrating the structure of a particle of a multilayer-coated powder according to the present invention; numeral 1 denotes a base particle, 2 a coating layer, and 3 a coating layer.

Fig. 2 is a graphic presentation showing reflection intensity spectral waveforms for the unit coating films constituting the multilayered film of a powder colored in white.

Fig. 3 is a graphic presentation showing reflection intensity spectral waveforms for the unit coating films constituting the multilayered film of a powder colored monochromatically.

BEST MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

The present invention will be explained below in more detail by reference to Examples. However, the invention should not be construed as being limited to these Examples only.

EXAMPLE 1

Intended use: pigment powder

First layer: titania coating

To 10 g of an acrylic powder (average particle diameter, 1.5 μm ; specific gravity, 1.4) was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 3.5 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 3.5 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-coated powder A_1 was obtained. The titania-coated powder A_1 obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder A_1 had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 455 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 32%. It was pale-blue.

Second layer: silica coating

To 10 g of the titania-coated powder A_1 was added 100 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The

container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto were added 6 g of silicon ethoxide, ammonia water (29%), and 8 g of water. This mixture was allowed to react for 3 hours under stirring. After the reaction, the reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then filtered. The solid matter obtained was dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, silica-titania-coated powder A₂ was obtained. The silica-titania-coated powder A₂ obtained had excellent dispersibility.

Third layer: titania coating

To 10 g of the silica-titania-coated powder A₂ was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 3.4 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 3.4 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-silica-coated powder A was

obtained. The titania-silica-coated powder A obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder A had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 448 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 45%. It was blue.

The refractive index and film thickness of each of the first to third layers are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Coating Layers	Refractive Index	Film Thickness (nm)
First layer: titania film	2.3	50
Second layer: silica film	1.45	99
Third layer: titania film	2.3	49

EXAMPLE 2

Intended use: pigment powder

First layer: titania coating

A hundred grams of an acrylic powder (average particle diameter, 55 μm ; specific gravity, 1.5) was placed in a lowly vacuum rotary mixing vessel in which a tungsten crucible containing a sufficient amount of a titania powder had been disposed beforehand in an upper part thereof. The crucible was heated to thereby

vaporize the titania while stirring the acrylic powder. Thus, the powder in the rotary mixing vessel was coated with titania to obtain titania-coated powder B_1 . The titania-coated powder B_1 obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder B_1 had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 545 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 78%. It was pale-green.

Second layer: magnesium fluoride coating

Eighty grams of the titania-coated powder B_1 was likewise placed in a lowly vacuum rotary mixing vessel in which a tungsten crucible containing a sufficient amount of a magnesium fluoride powder had been disposed beforehand in an upper part thereof. The crucible was heated to thereby vaporize the magnesium fluoride while stirring the powder B_1 . Thus, the powder in the rotary mixing vessel was coated with magnesium fluoride to obtain magnesium fluoride-titania-coated powder B_2 . The magnesium fluoride-titania-coated powder B_2 obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles.

Third layer: titania coating

A hundred grams of the magnesium fluoride-titania-coated powder B₂ was placed in a lowly vacuum rotary mixing vessel in which a tungsten crucible containing a sufficient amount of a titania powder had been disposed beforehand in an upper part thereof. The crucible was heated to thereby vaporize the titania while stirring the powder B₂. Thus, the powder in the rotary mixing vessel was coated with titania to obtain titania/magnesium fluoride-coated powder B. The titania/magnesium fluoride-coated powder B obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder C had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 500 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 88%. It was blue-green.

The refractive index and film thickness of each of the first to third layers are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Coating Layers	Refractive Index	Film Thickness (nm)
First layer: titania film	2.6	52
Second layer: magnesium fluoride film	1.38	101
Third layer: titania film	2.6	48

EXAMPLE 3

Intended use: powder for cosmetic material

First layer: titania coating

To 10 g of an acrylic powder (average particle diameter, 1.5 μm ; specific gravity, 1.4) was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 3.5 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 3.5 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-coated powder C₁ was obtained. The titania-coated powder C₁ obtained had satisfactory

dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 455 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 32%. It was pale-blue.

Second layer: polystyrene coating

To 600 g of distilled water was added 100 g of styrene monomer. While this mixture was heated to 70°C under stirring, sodium lauryl sulfate was added thereto to emulsify the monomer. With this emulsion was mixed 25 g of the titania-coated powder C₁. The resultant mixture was agitated at a high speed to sufficiently mix the ingredients. An aqueous ammonium persulfate solution was added thereto in an amount of 10% to initiate a polymerization reaction. The mixture was allowed to react for 4 hours under stirring. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was diluted with 2 liters of distilled water, and the supernatant was discarded by decantation to collect the precipitate. This precipitate was dried on a filter paper to obtain polystyrene-titania-coated powder C₂. The polystyrene-titania-coated powder C₂ obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles.

Third layer: titania coating

To 10 g of the polystyrene-titania-coated powder C₂ was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 3.4 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 3.4 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-polystyrene-coated powder C was obtained. The titania-polystyrene-coated powder C obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder C had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 448 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 45%. It was blue.

The refractive index and film thickness of each of the first to third layers are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Coating Layers	Refractive Index	Film Thickness (nm)
First layer: titania film	2.3	50
Second layer: polystyrene film	1.5	75
Third layer: titania film	2.3	49

EXAMPLE 4

Intended use: powder for cosmetic material

First layer: titania coating

To 10 g of an acrylic powder (average particle diameter, 1.5 μm ; specific gravity, 1.4) was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 4.5 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 4.5 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-coated powder D_1 was obtained. The titania-coated powder D_1 obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles.

This powder D_1 had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 545 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 31%. It was green.

Second layer: polystyrene coating

To 600 g of distilled water was added 127 g of styrene monomer. While this mixture was heated to 70°C under stirring, sodium lauryl sulfate was added thereto to emulsify the monomer. With this emulsion was mixed 25 g of the titania-coated powder D_1 . The resultant mixture was agitated at a high speed to sufficiently mix the ingredients. An aqueous ammonium persulfate solution was added thereto in an amount of 10% to initiate a polymerization reaction. The mixture was allowed to react for 4 hours under stirring. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was diluted with 2 liters of distilled water, and the supernatant was discarded by decantation to collect the precipitate. This precipitate was dried on a filter paper to obtain polystyrene-titania-coated powder D_2 . The polystyrene-titania-coated powder D_2 obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles.

Third layer: titania coating

To 10 g of the polystyrene-titania-coated powder D₂ was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 4.5 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 4.5 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-polystyrene-coated powder D₃ was obtained. The titania-polystyrene-coated powder D₃ obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder D₃ had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 544 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 43%. It was green.

Fourth layer: polystyrene coating

To 600 g of distilled water was added 127 g of styrene monomer. While this mixture was heated to 70°C under stirring, sodium lauryl sulfate was added thereto to emulsify the monomer. With this emulsion was mixed

25 g of the titania-polystyrene-coated powder D₃. The resultant mixture was agitated at a high speed to sufficiently mix the ingredients. An aqueous ammonium persulfate solution was added thereto in an amount of 10% to initiate a polymerization reaction. The mixture was allowed to react for 4 hours under stirring. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was diluted with 2 liters of distilled water, and the supernatant was discarded by decantation to collect the precipitate. This precipitate was dried on a filter paper to obtain polystyrene-titania-coated powder D₄. The polystyrene-titania-coated powder D₄ obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles.

Fifth layer: titania coating

To 10 g of the polystyrene-titania-coated powder D₄ was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 4.5 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 4.5 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was

diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-polystyrene-coated powder D was obtained. The titania-polystyrene-coated powder D obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder D had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 552 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 58%. It was green. Ultraviolet light having wavelengths of 300 nm and smaller was absorbed by the titania films, and the reflectance in this region was 1% or lower.

The refractive index and film thickness of each of the first to fifth layers are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Coating Layers	Refractive Index	Film Thickness (nm)
First layer: titania film	2.3	59
Second layer: polystyrene film	1.5	92
Third layer: titania film	2.3	59
Fourth layer: polystyrene film	1.5	93
Fifth layer: titania film	2.3	60

EXAMPLE 5

Intended use: powder for cosmetic material

First layer: titania coating

To 10 g of an acrylic powder (average particle diameter, 1.5 μm ; specific gravity, 1.4) was added 250 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 5.5 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 5.5 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-coated powder E_1 was obtained. The titania-coated powder E_1 obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles.

Second layer: silver metal coating

Into a silver solution prepared beforehand was dispersed 20 g of the titania-coated powder E_1 under stirring. While the particles were kept dispersed by stirring, 600 ml of a reducing solution was added thereto. This mixture was stirred for 30 minutes. As a

result, silver metal-titania-coated powder E₂ was obtained, which had satisfactory dispersibility. The above silver solution and reducing solution were prepared in the following manners. In preparing the silver solution, 8.75 g of silver nitrate was dissolved in 300 ml of distilled water. Since a precipitate of silver oxide generated, ammonia water (29%) was added until the precipitate changed into complex ions. Subsequently, a solution prepared beforehand by dissolving sodium hydroxide in 300 ml of distilled water was added. Since a precipitate of silver oxide generated again, ammonia water (29%) was added until the precipitate changed into complex ions. Thus, the silver solution was prepared. The reducing solution was prepared by dissolving 45 g of glucose in 1 liter of water, adding 4 g of tartaric acid and dissolving the same, boiling the resultant solution for 5 minutes, cooling the solution, and then adding 100 ml of ethanol.

Third layer: titania coating

Into 250 ml of ethanol was dispersed 10 g of the silver metal-titania-coated powder E₂. The container was heated with an oil bath to keep the temperature of the liquid at 55°C. Thereto was added 4.5 g of titanium isopropoxide. This mixture was stirred. A solution

prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 5.5 g of water was added dropwise to the above mixture over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 2 hours. This reaction mixture was diluted and washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol and then dried with a vacuum dryer at 180°C for 8 hours. After the drying, titania-silver metal-coated powder E was obtained. The titania-silver metal-coated powder E obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. This powder had a spectral reflection curve having a bottom wavelength of 585 nm, from which the reflectance increased toward both sides. The powder E had a maximum reflectance of 45% and was purplish-red. In the infrared region, the reflectance increased throughout the range from 780 to 910 nm due to reflection by the silver film, and the maximum reflectance was 60%. In the ultraviolet region, however, ultraviolet light having wavelengths of 300 nm and smaller was absorbed by the silver film and the titania films, and the reflectance in this region was not higher than 5%.

The refractive index and film thickness of each of the first to third layers are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Coating Layers	Refractive Index	Film Thickness (nm)
First layer: titania film	2.3	64
Second layer: silver metal film	$0.1 + 3.5i$	20
Third layer: titania film	2.3	64

EXAMPLE 6

Intended use: powder for electrorheological fluid

First layer: silver metal coating film

Into a silver solution prepared beforehand was dispersed, under stirring, 50 g of polyolefin particles (specific gravity, 2.2) having an average particle diameter of 5.6 μm . While the particles were kept dispersed by stirring, 600 ml of a reducing solution was added thereto. This mixture was stirred for 30 minutes. As a result, a silver metal-coated olefin particles F_1 were obtained, which had satisfactory dispersibility. The above silver solution and reducing solution were prepared in the following manners. In preparing the silver solution, 8.75 g of silver nitrate was dissolved in 300 ml of distilled water. Since a precipitate of silver oxide generated, ammonia water (concentration, 29%) was added until the precipitate changed into complex ions. Subsequently, a solution prepared

beforehand by dissolving sodium hydroxide in 300 ml of distilled water was added. Since a precipitate of silver oxide generated again, ammonia water (29%) was added until the precipitate changed into complex ions. Thus, the silver solution was prepared. The reducing solution was prepared by dissolving 45 g of glucose in 1 liter of water, adding 4 g of tartaric acid and dissolving the same, boiling the resultant solution for 5 minutes, cooling the solution, and then adding 100 ml of ethanol.

Second layer: polystyrene coating film

To 600 g of distilled water was added 300 g of styrene monomer. While this mixture was heated to 70°C under stirring, sodium lauryl sulfate was added thereto to emulsify the monomer. With this emulsion was mixed 45 g of the silver metal-coated polyolefin powder F₁ whose surface had been lipophilized with methacrylic acid. The resultant mixture was agitated at a high speed to sufficiently mix the ingredients. An aqueous ammonium persulfate solution was added thereto in an amount of 10% to initiate a polymerization reaction. The mixture was allowed to react for 4 hours under stirring. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was diluted with 2 liters of distilled

water, and the supernatant was discarded by decantation to collect the precipitate. This precipitate was dried on a filter paper to obtain polystyrene-silver-coated polyethylene powder F₂.

Third layer: titania coating film

A solution prepared by mixing 250 ml of ethanol with 6 g of titanium isopropoxide was added to 10 g of the polystyrene-silver-coated polyolefin powder F₂ obtained again through heat treatment. This mixture was sufficiently stirred to disperse the particles. The resultant solution was heated to and maintained at 55°C with an oil bath. A solution prepared by mixing 30 ml of ethanol with 8.0 g of water was added dropwise thereto over 60 minutes, and the resultant mixture was allowed to react for 3 hours and then subjected to vacuum drying and heat treatment to obtain titania-polystyrene-silver-coated olefin powder F. The titania-polystyrene-silver-coated olefin powder F obtained had satisfactory dispersibility and was composed of independent particles. It was a powder of a bright color and was responsive to an electric field. This powder had a spectral reflection curve having a peak wavelength of 534 nm and had a reflectance at the peak wavelength of 47%. It was bright-green.

EXAMPLE 7

Intended use: powder for electrorheological fluid

(Powder employing BaTiO_3 film as high-refractive-index film (refractive index, about 2))

First layer: barium titanate film

Fifty grams of polystyrene particles (specific gravity, 1.06) having an average particle diameter of $5.6\ \mu\text{m}$ were dispersed into 1,000 ml of ethanol together with 27.5 g of barium ethoxide and 26.0 g of titanium ethoxide. While the resultant solution was kept at 55°C together with the container under stirring, a solution prepared beforehand by mixing 26.8 g of ammonia water having a pH of 10 with 118 g of ethanol was added thereto dropwise over 1 hour. This mixture was then allowed to react for 6 hours.

After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol with decantation, and the solid matter was taken out by filtration and then vacuum-dried at 180°C for 8 hours.

In the barium titanate-coated polystyrene powder G_1 obtained, the barium titanate coating film had a thickness of 75 nm and a refractive index of about 2.

Second layer: silica film

To 50 g of the barium titanate-coated polystyrene powder G_1 was added 1,000 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. Thereto were added 30 g of silicon ethoxide, 40 g of ammonia water (29%), and 40 g of water. This mixture was allowed to react for 6 hours under stirring. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol with decantation, and the solid matter was taken out by filtration and then vacuum-dried at 180°C for 8 hours.

The silica film of the silica-barium titanate-coated polystyrene powder G_2 obtained had a thickness of 98 nm and a refractive index of about 1.5.

Third layer: barium titanate film

Fifty grams of the silica-barium titanate-coated polystyrene powder G_2 was dispersed into 1,000 ml of ethanol together with 27.5 g of barium ethoxide and 26.0 g of titanium ethoxide. While the resultant solution was kept at 55°C together with the container under stirring, a solution prepared beforehand by mixing 26.8 g of ammonia water having a pH of 10 with 118 g of ethanol was added thereto dropwise over 1 hour. This mixture was then allowed to react for 6 hours.

After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol with decantation, and the solid matter was taken out by filtration and then vacuum-dried at 180°C for 8 hours.

The barium titanate coating film as the third layer of the barium titanate-coated polystyrene powder G obtained had a thickness of 77 nm and a refractive index of about 2.

The powder G obtained had a reflection peak of 41% with respect to light having a wavelength of 550 nm and had a green color. This three-layer-coated powder had a relative permittivity of 420.

EXAMPLE 8

Intended use: powder for electrorheological fluid

(Powder employing BaTiO_3 film as high-refractive-index film (refractive index, about 2))

First layer: barium titanate film

Fifty grams of Shirasu balloons (average particle diameter, 10.2 μm ; specific gravity, 1.2) were dispersed into 1,000 ml of ethanol together with 2.75 g of barium ethoxide and 2.6 g of titanium ethoxide. While the resultant solution was kept at 55°C together with the container under stirring, a solution prepared beforehand by mixing 2.7 g of ammonia water having a pH of 10 with

118 g of ethanol was added thereto dropwise over 1 hour. This mixture was then allowed to react for 6 hours.

After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol with decantation, and the solid matter was taken out by filtration and then heated at 350°C for 8 hours.

In the barium titanate-coated Shirasu balloon powder H₁ obtained, the barium titanate coating film had a thickness of 75 nm and a refractive index of about 2.

Second layer: silica film

To 50 g of the barium titanate-coated Shirasu balloon powder H₁ was added 1,000 ml of ethanol to disperse the particles. Thereto were added 30 g of silicon ethoxide, 4 g of ammonia water (29%), and 4 g of water. This mixture was allowed to react for 6 hours under stirring. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol with decantation, and the solid matter was taken out by filtration and then heated at 350°C for 8 hours.

The silica film of the silica-barium titanate-coated polystyrene powder H₂ obtained had a thickness of 98 nm and a refractive index of about 1.5.

Third layer: barium titanate film

Fifty grams of the silica-barium titanate-coated Shirasu balloon powder H_2 was dispersed into 1,000 ml of ethanol together with 2.75 g of barium ethoxide and 2.6 g of titanium ethoxide. While the resultant solution was kept at 55°C together with the container under stirring, a solution prepared beforehand by mixing 26.8 g of ammonia water having a pH of 10 with 118 g of ethanol was added thereto dropwise over 1 hour. This mixture was then allowed to react for 6 hours.

After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was washed with a sufficient amount of ethanol with decantation, and the solid matter was taken out by filtration and then heated at 350°C for 8 hours.

Thus, powder H_3 was obtained comprising the Shirasu balloon powder H_2 and a barium titanate film with which the balloons were coated.

This powder H_3 was subjected twice to the same procedure for coating with barium titanate as the above. As a result, a silica-barium titanate-coated Shirasu balloon powder H was obtained in which the barium titanate film as the third layer was composed of three layers.

The barium titanate film as the third layer of the silica-barium titanate-coated Shirasu balloon powder

H obtained had a thickness of 227 nm. The powder H obtained had a reflection peak of 40% with respect to light having a wavelength of 757 nm and had a green color. This three-layer-coated powder had a relative permittivity of 680.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

As described above, according to the present invention, a pigment powder retaining a stable color tone even in long-term storage can be provided which comprises a lightweight base particle and is capable of being colored without using a dye or pigment and with which not only a pigment for monochromatic color inks, e.g., blue, green, or yellow inks, can be obtained by dispersing the pigment powder into a fluid, but also a filler for plastics/papers can be designed.

A monochromatic colored powder, e.g., a blue, green, or yellow powder, can be designed for use as a material for mascaras and eyebrow pencils. Since this powder for use as a material for cosmetics contains no dye or pigment, it is free from the fading caused by the deficiency or denaturation of a dye or pigment and is capable of retaining a bright color over long. It is also possible to design a powder of a multilayer structure which not only serves to color but functions

to absorb electromagnetic radiation having harmful wavelengths, such as ultraviolet and infrared rays, and thus prevent the radiation to reach the skin, and which is for use as a material for, e.g., UV-cutting (sunscreen) creams or foundations. Furthermore, the powder of this invention for use in electrorheological fluids is lightweight and has satisfactory dispersibility. This powder can be made to have a combination of various functions by forming a multilayered coating film while selecting the material of each layer of the coating film. According to the combination of coating film layers, a powder having excellent electrorheological fluid properties is obtained. By regulating the refractive indexes of coating film layers, a colored powder is obtained. Since these powders each is composed of lightweight particles, they are highly suitable for use in ink-jet color ink printers, color displays, etc.

Moreover, since the coating film of the powder of this invention for use in electrorheological fluids is a dense and continuous film, the powder has a high degree of properties and is free from the drawback that the coating film peels off during use.

CLAIMS

1. A multilayer-coated powder comprising a base particle having a specific gravity of 0.1 to 10.5 and having thereon plural coating layers which are different from each other in refractive index.

2. The multilayer-coated powder according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the coating layers is an inorganic metal compound layer.

3. The multilayer-coated powder according to claim 2, wherein the inorganic metal compound layer is a metal oxide film layer.

4. The multilayer-coated powder according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the coating layers is a metal layer or an alloy layer.

5. The multilayer-coated powder according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the coating layers is an organic layer.

6. A pigment powder, comprising the multilayer-coated powder according to any one of claims 1 to 5.

7. A material for a cosmetic, comprising the multilayer-coated powder according to any one of claims 1 to 5.

8. A powder for an electrorheological fluid, comprising the multilayer-coated powder according to any one of claims 1 to 5.