Curvilinear Micromagnetism



Contribution ID: 31

Type: Invited talk

Antiferromagnetism for crystals with curved atomic planes: atomic dislocations create spin half-vortices (disclinations)

Friday, 24 May 2019 10:00 (30 minutes)

The standard spin state of antiferromagnets (AFM) contains two magnetic sublattices with equivalent spins s_1 and s_2 , magnetized in the opposite direction such that $s_1 + s_2 = 0$ in the ground state. For their description, so-called Neel vector $l = (s_1 - s_2)/|s_1 - s_2|$ is used. This kind of ordering is sensitive to crystal lattice dislocations, which destroy the sublattice structure of a perfect antiferromagnet such that $s_1 \rightarrow s_2$ and $s_2 \rightarrow s_1$ after a passing around the dislocation along a simple closed counter. Lattice dislocations can be treated as a destruction of the "ideal" geometry and even topology of the atomic planes in a crystal, may give rise to an inhomogeneous spin distribution [1, 2]. Both edge dislocation (atomic plane, broken along some line) and screw dislocation (atomic plane of the form of the Riemann surface for the function $w = z^{\nu}$ with irrational ν) are the origin of the singular line in the field of the Neel vector l. This line is common to the disclinations in the field of vector-director n for nematic liquid crystals: the vector l changes its sing when passing around the AFM disclination line. Spin disclinations were observed in thin films of chromium [3]. For a layered antiferromagnet with a screw dislocation, spin disclination have a macroscopic-sized ferromagnetic core [4].

The review of the static and dynamic properties of the spin non-uniform states caused by different non-ideal topology of the atomic planes of the crystal lattices is done. Single atomic dislocation produces spin disclination, whereas a "compensated" system of dislocations, closed dislocation loop in 3-dimensional (3D) AFM or pair of dislocations loop in 2D AFM produces localized non-uniformity (singular droplet soliton) of the Neel vector. For easy-plane AFM with the form of these solitons is spherical or circular in 3D or 2D cases, accordingly, but it transforms to the ellipsoidal in the presence of in-plane anisotropy. The dynamical solitons with the precession of the Neel vector (e.g., excited by the spin transfer torque) are also possible.

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