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Ordinary and Triplet Superconducting Spin Valve Effect in Fe/Pb Based Heterostructures

Authors : P. V. Leksin, A. A. Kamashev, N. N. Garifyanov, I. A. Garifullin, Ya. V. Fominov, J. Schumann, Y. Krupskaya, V. Kataev, O. G. Schmidt, B. Büchner

Abstract : We report on experimental evidence for the occurrence of the long range triplet correlations (LRTC) of the superconducting (SC) condensate in the spin-valve heterostructures CoOx/Fe1/Cu/Fe2/Pb. The LRTC generation in this layer sequence is accompanied by a Tc suppression near the orthogonal mutual orientation of the Fe1 and Fe2 layers' magnetization. This Tc drop reaches its maximum of 60mK at the Fe2 layer thickness dFe2 = 0.6 nm and falls down when dFe2 is increased. The modification of the Fe/Pb interface by using a thin Cu intermediate layer between Fe and Pb layers reduces the SC transition width without preventing the interaction between Pb and Fe2 layers. The dependence of the SSVE magnitude on Fe1 layer thickness dFe1 reveals maximum of the effect when dFe1 and dFe2 are equal and the dFe2 value is minimal. Using the optimal Fe layers thicknesses and the intermediate Cu layer between Pb and Fe2 layer we realized almost full switching from normal to superconducting state due to SSVE.

Keywords: superconductivity, ferromagnetism, heterostructures, proximity effect

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