MAGNETIC NANOSTRUCTURES

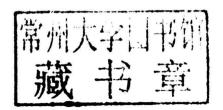
FRANK J. OWENS

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PHYSICS OF MAGNETIC NANOSTRUCTURES

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PHYSICS OF MAGNETIC NANOSTRUCTURES

PREFACE

When solids have dimensions of nanometers, the properties of the solids change. Such properties as strength, melting temperature, color, electrical conductivity, thermal conductivity, reactivity, and magnetic properties are affected, and the magnitude of the change depends on the size of the solid in the nanometer regime. The changes also depend on the number of dimensions that are nanometers in size. Thus, size in the nanometer regime can be used to design and engineer materials with new and possibly technologically interesting properties. The development of applications based on nanoscience research is referred to as nanotechnology. Because of this potential, nanotechnology and nanoscience have generated much interest in recent years in the materials science, chemistry, physics, and engineering communities. As a result, chemistry, physics, materials science, and engineering departments at universities are developing courses in the various subfields of nanotechnology.

Nanostructured magnetic materials have a particularly strong possibility for developing new and interesting applications. In fact, there are already a number of technologies that employ nanostructured magnetic materials such as computer data storage and ferrofluids. The development of digital computers capable of handling large software programs has created a strong need for increased storage capability. Storage density has almost doubled every year. This is a result of a major research thrust in developing magnetic nanoparticles of smaller sizes with appropriate properties, which enables increased storage density. This increased density of smaller magnetic nanoparticles has driven the need to develop more sensitive methods of reading the storage devices because smaller particles have lower magnetizations. Nanosized magnetoresistive materials such as magnetic tunnel junctions have the potential to increase the sensitivity of reading devices.

x PREFACE

Presently, there is also active research to develop new applications in the medical field. Such ideas as using magnetic nanoparticles for targeted delivery of drugs and enhancement of images in magnetic resonance imaging are presently under investigation. Using magnetic nanoparticles loaded with chemotherapeutic drugs to deliver them directly to the tumor has a large potential to eliminate the negative side effects of the drugs. Understanding this research and its possibilities requires knowledge of the basic ideas and properties of magnetic materials, how they are measured, and how nanosizing affects these properties.

This book, *The Physics of Magnetic Nanostructures*, is intended to provide this understanding as an introduction to the subject for those who wish to learn about the field or become involved in research on the subject. With omission of some sections, the book could also be the basis of a senior undergraduate or graduate level textbook on how and why reducing the size of solids to nanodimensions changes magnetic properties. Thus, exercises have been included at the end of each chapter. The objectives of the book are to describe how magnetic properties depend on the size and dimension in the nanometer regime and to explain using relatively simple models of the solid state why these changes occur. Experimental methods for measuring the magnetic properties are described as the data from them are first presented.

The first chapter presents a basic overview of the effect reducing the size of a solid to nanometers on the fundamental properties of the materials. The next chapter reviews the physics of magnetism and methods of measuring magnetic properties, which is necessary to understand how nanosizing affects magnetism. The remaining chapters discuss various kinds of magnetic structures and how nanosizing influences their magnetic properties. This includes two chapters that present potential and actual applications, one on devices and the other on medical applications.

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CONTENTS

Preface		ix		
A	cknov	vledgm	nent	xi
1	Properties of Nanostructures		1	
	1.1	Cohes	sive Energy	Ĩ
	1.2	Electr	ronic Properties	7
	1.3	Quant	tum Dots	10
	1.4	Vibrat	tional Properties	12
	1.5	Sumn	nary	17
	Refe	erences		17
2	The	Physic	es of Magnetism	19
	2.1	Kinds	s of Magnetism	19
	2.2	Param	nagnetism	20
		2.2.1	Theory of Paramagnetism	20
		2.2.2	Methods of Measuring Susceptibility	22
	2.3	Ferro	magnetism	25
		2.3.1	Theory of Ferromagnetism	25
		2.3.2	Magnetic Resonance	29
	2.4	Antife	erromagnetism	32
	References		34	

vi CONTENTS

3	Prop	erties of Magnetic Nar	oparticles	35
	3.1	Superparamagnetism		35
		Effect of Particle Size	on Magnetization	35
	3.3		Magnetic Nanoparticles	37
		-	d Particles in Frozen Fluids	41
	3.5	Magnetism Induced by		47
		Antiferromagnetic Nan		48
	3.7	Magnetoresistive Mate		50
		rences		53
4	Bull	Nanostructured Magi	netic Materials	55
	4.1	Ferromagnetic Solids V	Vith Nanosized Grains	55
	4.2	Low-Dimensional Mag		57
		4.2.1 Magnetic Quan		57
		4.2.2 Magnetic Quan		61
			Dimensional Magnetic Arrays	
		One Atom at a		65
	4.3	Magnetoresistance in E	Bulk Nanostructured Materials	67
	Refe	rences		74
5	Mag	netism in Carbon and	Boron Nitride Nanostructures	75
	5.1	Carbon Nanostructures		75
		5.1.1 Fullerene, C ₆₀		75
		5.1.2 Carbon and Bor	on Nitride Nanotubes	78
		5.1.3 Graphene		81
	5.2	Experimental Observations of Magnetism in Carbon		
		and Boron Nitride Nanostructures		81
		5.2.1 Magnetism in C	(60)	81
		5.2.2 Ferromagnetism	n in Carbon and Boron Nitride Nanotubes	87
		5.2.3 Magnetism in C	Fraphene	88
	Refe	rences		93
6	Nan	ostructured Magnetic	Semiconductors	95
	6.1	Electron-Hole Junction	1S	95
	6.2			98
	6.3			99
	6.4			100
	6.5 Nanostructuring in Magnetic Semiconductors		103	
	6.6			106
		6.7 DMS Quantum Dots		106
	6.8			107
	6.9			100
	Semiconductors			108
	Refe	rences		111

CONTENTS	vii
CONTENTS	VII

7	App	lication	s of Magnetic Nanostructures	113
	7.1	Ferrofl	uids	113
	7.2	Magne	tic Storage (Hard Drives)	118
	7.3	Electri	c Field Control of Magnetism	121
	7.4	Magne	tic Photonic Crystals	123
	7.5	Magne	tic Nanoparticles as Catalysts	125
	7.6	Magne	tic Nanoparticle Labeling of Hazardous Materials	127
	Refe	erences		129
8	Med	lical Ap	plications of Magnetic Nanostructures	131
	8.1	Targete	ed Drug Delivery	131
	8.2	-	tic Hyperthermia	132
	8.3	Magne	tic Separation	134
	8.4	Magne	tic Nanoparticles For Enhanced Contrast in Magnetic	
		Resona	ince Imaging	135
	8.5	Detecti	on of Bacteria	139
			is of Stored Blood	144
	Refe	erences		146
9	Fab	rication	of Magnetic Nanostructures	147
	9.1	Magne	tic Nanoparticles	147
	9.2	Magne	tic Quantum Wells	149
	9.3	Magne	tic Nanowires	152
	9.4	Magne	tic Quantum Dots	153
	Refe	erences		154
AF	PEN	DIX A	A Table of Number of Atoms Versus Size in Face	
			Centered Cubic Nanoparticles	155
AF	PEN	DIX B	Definition of a Magnetic Field	157
		DIX C	Density Functional Theory	159
	APPENDIX D Tight Binding Model of Electronic Structure of Metals			163
AF	PEN	DIX E	Periodic Boundary Conditions	165
Inc	dex			167

PROPERTIES OF NANOSTRUCTURES

Nanostructures are generally considered to consist of a number of atoms or molecules bonded together in a cluster with at least one dimension less than 100 nm. A nanometer is 10⁻⁹ m or 10 Å. Spherical particles having a radius of about 1000 Å or less can be considered to be nanoparticles. If one dimension is reduced to the nano range, while the other two dimensions remain large, then we obtain a structure known as a well. If two dimensions are reduced, while one remains large, the resulting structure is referred to as a wire. The limiting case of this process of size reduction in which all three dimensions reach the low nanometer range is called a dot. Figure 1.1 illustrates the structures of rectangular wells, wires, and dots. This chapter will discuss how the important properties of materials such as the cohesive energy and the electronic and vibrational structure are affected when materials have at least one length in the nanometer range. Elementary models of the solid state will be used to explain why the changes occur on nanosizing.

1.1 COHESIVE ENERGY

The atoms or ions of a solid are held together by interactions between them, which can be electrostatic and/or covalent. The electrostatic interaction is described by the Coulomb potential between charged particles. Covalent bonding involves overlap of wave functions of outer electrons of nearest neighbor atoms in the lattice. A crystal is stable if the total energy of the lattice is less than the sum of the energies of the atoms or molecules that make up the crystal when they are isolated from each other. The energy difference is the cohesive energy of the solid. As materials approach nanometer dimensions, the percentage of atoms on the surface increases. Figure 1.2 demonstrates a plot of the percentage of atoms on the surface of a hypothetical face-centered cubic (fcc) structure having a lattice parameter of 4Å. Appendix A provides

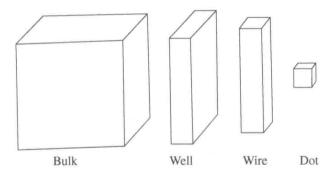


FIGURE 1.1 Structures corresponding to a rectangular well, wire, and dot having one, two, and three dimensions of nanometer length, respectively.

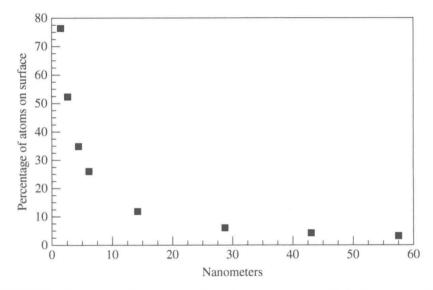


FIGURE 1.2 Percentage of atoms on surface of a face-centered cubic lattice versus particle size. The lattice parameter is 4Å.

a table relating the diameter of spherical nanoparticles to the number of atoms in the particle and the percentage on the surface. Below about 14 nm, more than 10% of the atoms are on the surface. This holds true for metallic particles as well as ionically and covalently bonded materials. Since the atoms on the surface have less nearest neighbor atoms, this means that the cohesive energy of an ionic solid decreases as the size is reduced in the nanometer range. One of the results of this decrease in cohesive energy is an increase in the separation of the constituents of the lattice. Figure 1.3 shows an X-ray diffraction measurement of the lattice parameter of the ionic solid CeO₂ as a function of particle size showing the increase in the lattice parameter as the particle size is reduced. This results in a reduction of the strength of the interaction between the ions of the solid and thus a reduction in the cohesive energy.

COHESIVE ENERGY 3

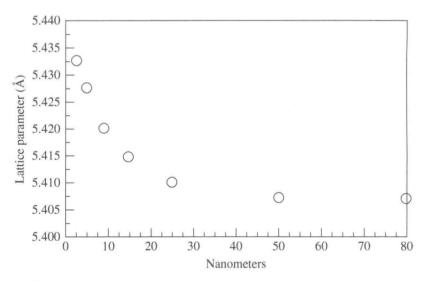


FIGURE 1.3 Experimental measurement of the lattice parameter of the ionic crystal, CeO₂, versus particle size. (Reproduced with permission from Zhang et al. [1]. © 2002, AIP Publishing LLC.)

Ionic solids are ordered arrays of positive and negative ions such as sodium chloride, which is an fcc structure of positive sodium ions and an interpenetration of fcc negative chlorine ions. The interaction potential between the ions of charge Q is electrostatic, $\pm Q/r$. Ions of opposite sign are attracted, while ions of the same sign repel each other. The total electrostatic energy of any one ion i is U_i given by the sum of all the Coulomb interactions between the ith ion and all positive and negative ions of the lattice:

$$U_{i} = \sum_{j} U_{ij} = \sum_{j} \pm \frac{Q^{2}}{r_{ii}}$$
 (1.1)

where r_{ij} is the distance between ions i and j. In the case of the interaction between the nearest neighbors, a term has to be added to Equation 1.1 to take into account that the electron core around the nucleus repels those of the nearest neighbors. The form of this has been derived from experiment and is given by

$$\lambda \exp\left(\frac{-r_{ij}}{\rho}\right) \tag{1.2}$$

The constants λ and ρ for NaCl are 1.75×10^{-9} ergs and 0.321. The larger the r_{ij} , the smaller the cohesive energy. Thus, for ionic crystals, the cohesive energy decreases as the lattice parameter increases. Figure 1.4 shows a plot of the experimentally determined cohesive energy of crystals having the NaCl structure versus lattice parameter. The reduction of the cohesive energy also affects other properties such as

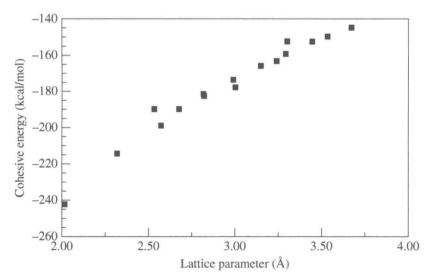


FIGURE 1.4 Cohesive energy of ionic alkali halide crystal having NaCl structure versus lattice parameter.

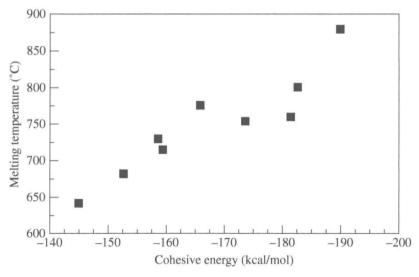


FIGURE 1.5 Melting temperature of some alkali halide crystals versus cohesive energy.

the melting temperature. Figure 1.5 illustrates a plot of the melting temperature of some alkali halides versus cohesive energy. In general, when materials have nanometer dimensions, the melting temperature decreases.

Most of the experimental observations of the effect of size of metal nanoparticles on the lattice parameters show it decreases as the diameter decreases. The decrease is attributed to the effect of surface stress. The surface stress causes small particles to be in a state of compression where the internal pressure is inversely proportional to the radius of