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THE ORIGIN OF THE REDUCTION OF LOSS IN CURRENT-CARRYING  
FERROMAGNETS

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A simple model for the explanation of the decrease of coercive field  $H_c$  and loss  $E$  in magnetic ribbons carrying an electric current has been proposed. For lower currents accurate measurements performed on amorphous  $\text{Co}_{70.3}\text{Fe}_{4.7}\text{B}_{10}\text{Si}_{15}$  ribbon confirm the validity of the model. The results for higher currents can also be explained in terms of the same model providing that the influence of the perpendicular field (caused by the current flow) on the actual domain structure is taken into account. Based on the model predictions a new type of soft magnetic material is proposed.

### 1. Introduction

For some time it has been known that an electric current passing along the magnetic ribbon influences its magnetization<sup>1,2)</sup>. In particular some decrease in the coercive field  $H_c$  has been reported. More recently a drastic reduction of  $H_c$  and loss  $E$  has been achieved by passing direct current through MetglassR 2714 ribbons<sup>3)</sup>. Since rather low currents used in these experiments ruled out the domain wall (DW) dragg<sup>4)</sup> the phenomenon was ascribed to the effects of the magnetic field  $H_p$  caused by the flow of current. Later experiments confirmed this hypothesis<sup>5)</sup> and moreover have shown that the phenomenon does not depend on the actual origin of  $H_p$ <sup>6)</sup>. This knowledge has been used recently in order to produce the prototype composite magnetic material with soft magnetic properties exceeding those of the original material<sup>7)</sup>.

In what follows we use our model in order to calculate the variation of  $H_c$  with

$H_p$  for the hypothetical material consisting of two domains with antiparallel magnetizations. Further we use these results in order to explain the experimental data obtained for amorphous  $\text{Co}_{70.3}\text{Fe}_{4.7}\text{B}_{10}\text{Si}_{15}$  ribbon (hereafter CoFeBSi). Finally we explain the difference between the calculated and observed variations occurring at higher values of  $H_p$  in terms of the influence of  $H_p$  on the actual domain structure of such samples.

## 2. Experimental procedure

The measurements of the hysteresis loops of amorphous CoFeBSi ribbon have been performed with an induction technique at room temperature<sup>8)</sup>. The nonmagnetostrictive alloy has been selected because the domain structure of such ribbons<sup>9)</sup> is suitable for the application of our model and because the process of magnetization of this sample in the absence of the current flow has been known in some detail<sup>10)</sup>. The triangular driving field  $H$  with the amplitude  $H_{max} = 25$  A/m and the frequency  $f \doteq 5.5$  Hz have been used. The selected parameters enabled us to work with well defined magnetization processes ( $H_{max}$ ) and to avoid the excessive influence of the eddy current on the hysteresis curves. Direct current  $J$  flowing along the ribbon produces magnetic field  $H_p$  perpendicular to its length and antiparallel at the opposite surfaces. For a long thin ribbon  $H_p \doteq J/2w$  ( $w$  is the width of the ribbon) at its surfaces and vanishes at its center. The influence of  $H_p$  on the parameters of the hysteresis loops of CoFeBSi ribbon has been studied.

## 3. Model and calculation

It is well known that the magnetization of the domains  $I$  in amorphous ribbons is not quite parallel to their length<sup>11)</sup>. Because of this  $H_p$  has a nonvanishing projection on  $I$ ,  $P = H_p \sin \delta$  ( $\delta$  is the angle between  $I$  and the long axis of the ribbon as shown in the inset to Fig. 1) and therefore affects the magnetization of the ribbon. In particular depending on the direction of  $H_p$ ,  $P$  can either enhance or diminish the pressure of the driving field  $H$  on the domain wall (DW). The effect of  $H_p$  on DW depends on  $\delta$  and the location of pinning centres ( $H_p$  decreases inside the ribbon). Because of this we expect larger effect of  $H_p$  when pinning of DW is strongest at the ribbon surfaces (as is the case in nonmagnetostrictive ribbons<sup>12)</sup>). In what follows we will calculate the variation of  $H_c$  with  $H_p$  for the ribbon consisting of two domains with antiparallel magnetizations<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 5 in Ref. 5.).

The magnetization starts when the projection of  $H$  onto  $I$ ,  $P_H = H \cos \delta$ , reaches the magnitude  $S$  which is required to release DW. When pinning of DW at the opposite surfaces has different strength<sup>12)</sup>, the corresponding  $P_H$ 's will be different too ( $P_{Hu} = S_u$  and  $P_{Hl} \doteq S_l$  for the upper and lower surface, respectively).

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<sup>1</sup>Such domains dominate the magnetization of nonmagnetostrictive ribbons<sup>9)</sup>.

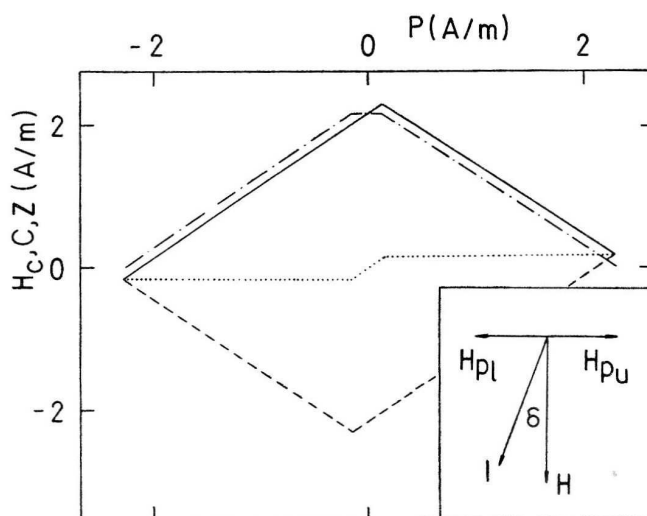


Fig. 1. Calculated coercive field  $H_c$  ( $-\cdot-\cdot-$ ), center of the hysteresis loop  $C$  ( $\cdot\cdot\cdot$ ) and projections  $Z$  of driving field  $H$  for "positive" ( $---$ ) and "negative" ( $---$ )  $H$  (see text) vs. projection  $P$  of the field  $H_p$  caused by the ribbon current for two domains separated by  $180^\circ$  wall. The inset: vectorial representation of  $H$ ,  $H_p$  ( $H_{pu}$  and  $H_{pl}$  at upper and lower surface of ribbon, respectively) and domain magnetisation  $I$ .

However DW will always be released from the surface with lower  $S$ . Therefore in the absence of  $H_p$  and assuming<sup>12)</sup>  $S_u < S_l$ ,  $H_{co} \doteq S_u$ .

When current flows through the ribbon,  $P_H$  and  $P$  act together on DW. For  $H$  changing from  $-H_{max}$  to  $H_{max}$  ("positive"  $H$ ) and  $H_{pu}$  and  $H_{pl}$  specified in the inset to Fig. 1,  $P_H$ 's required in order to release DW at the opposite surfaces of the sample are

$$P_{Hu} \doteq S_u + P, \quad (1)$$

$$P_{Hl} = S_l - P. \quad (2)$$

For  $H$  changing in the opposite direction ("negative"  $H$ )

$$P_{-Hu} = -S_u + P, \quad (3)$$

$$P_{-Hl} = -S_l - P. \quad (4)$$

The relations for  $P_H^-$ 's corresponding to opposite direction of  $J$  (opposite  $H_p$ 's) are obtained by exchanging the signs of  $P$ 's in Eqs. (1)–(4).

Since the magnetization changes whenever the projection of  $H$  reaches the lowest value required in order to depin DW in given circumstances (direction of  $H$ ,

directions and magnitudes of  $H_p$ 's) only parts of relations for  $P_H$ 's and  $P_H^-$ 's (full lines for "positive" and dashed for "negative"  $H$  in Fig. 1) will be relevant for the determination of width ( $H_c$ ) and position ( $C$ ) of the hysteresis loop. In particular for  $P \leq (S_l - S_u)/2$  follows  $P_{Hu} < P_{Hl}$  and  $P_{-Hu} < P_{-Hl}$ . Because of this, as shown in Fig. 1,

$$H_c \doteq (P_{Hu} - P_{-Hu})/2 = S_u, \quad (5)$$

i.e.  $H_c$  remains fixed at  $H_{c0}$  whereas

$$C = (P_{Hu} + P_{-Hu})/2 \doteq P \quad (6)$$

shifts with  $P$ .

Analogously for  $P > (S_l - S_u)/2$ ,

$$H_c = S_u + (S_l - S_u)/2 - P \quad (7)$$

decreases with  $P$  whereas

$$C = (S_l - S_u)/2 \quad (8)$$

remains constant (Fig. 1). The variations of  $H_c$  and  $C$  for the other direction of  $J$  (opposite signs of  $P$ 's) are obtained in the same way from the expressions for  $P_H^-$ 's. Variations of  $H_c$  and  $C$  with  $P$  are symmetrical in respect to  $P = 0$  (Fig. 1) and ignoring the eddy current loss,  $H_c$  is expected to vanish at  $P = (S_l + S_u)/2$ . We note that in Fig. 1 we used the values of  $S_u$  and  $S_l$  deduced from the experimental results for CoFeBSi ribbon and assumed that they are independent of  $H_p$ .

#### 4. Results and discussion

The variations of  $H_c$  and  $C$  with  $H_p$  for nonmagnetostrictive CoFeBSi ribbon are shown in Figs. 2 and 3. Since for the selected  $H_{max}$  strong pinning centres located at the surfaces of the ribbon<sup>12)</sup> dominate the magnetization processes<sup>10)</sup>,  $H_p = J/2w$  has been used. In nonmagnetostrictive ribbons wide domains separated by 180° DW dominate the magnetization<sup>9)</sup>. Therefore if the magnetizations of such domains can be represented with an average  $\delta$  one would expect the variations of  $H_c$  and  $C$  similar to those shown in Fig. 1. Figures 2 and 3 show that this is so for  $H_p \leq 5$  A/m. Moreover from the variation of  $C$  for  $H_p \leq 1$  A/m and  $H_c$  for  $1$  A/m  $\leq H_p \leq 5$  A/m we deduce the same value of  $\delta = (6 \pm 1)^\circ$  and obtain reasonable  $S_l - S_u \simeq 0.3$  A/m.

Whereas  $H_c$  continues to decrease beyond  $H_p = 5$  A/m (Fig. 2),  $C$  shows another strong increase (Fig. 3) which cannot be explained in terms of our simplified model of the domain structure (unique  $\delta$ ). Indeed some domains with magnetizations forming large angles with the ribbon long axis have been observed at the surfaces of nonmagnetostrictive ribbons<sup>13)</sup>. These domains are apparently of minor

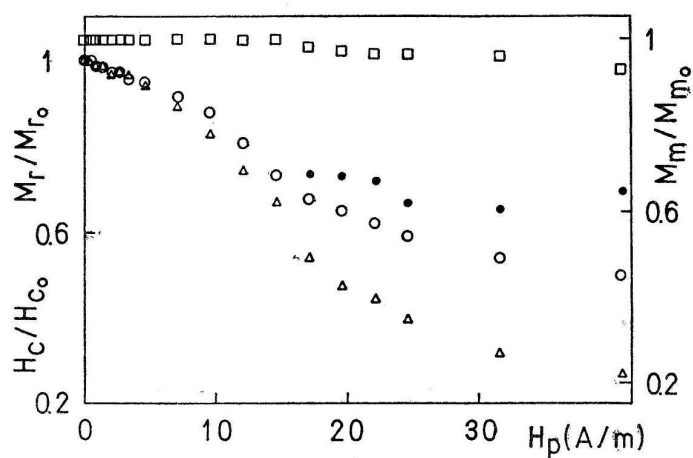


Fig. 2. Normalized maximum magnetization  $M_m$  ( $\square$ ), remanent magnetization  $M_r$  ( $\Delta$ ) and coercive field  $H_c$  with ( $\bullet$ ) and without ( $\circ$ ) correction for the change of  $M_m$  vs. magnetic field  $H_p$  caused by the ribbon current for CoFeBSi alloy.

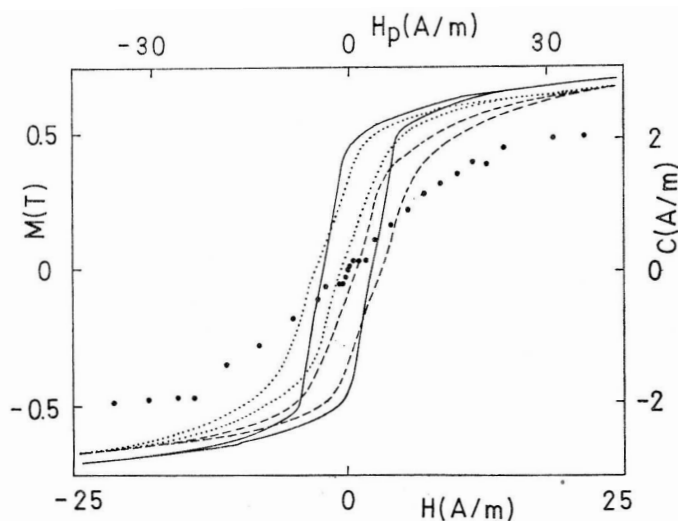


Fig. 3. Hysteresis loops of CoFeBSi ribbon at 5.5 Hz for  $H_p \doteq 0$  (—), 30 ( $\cdots$ ) and  $-30$  A/m ( $-\cdots$ ). Shift of the center of the loop  $C$  ( $\bullet$ ) with  $H_p$ .

importance<sup>9)</sup> for  $H_c$  in the absence of  $H_p$ . However, since they become more stable on increasing  $H_p$  they may become efficient DW pinning centres<sup>14)</sup> at elevated  $H_p$ . Since different domain pattern were observed at the opposite surfaces of the ribbons it seems clear that the stabilisation of the unfavourably oriented domains would lead to a change in the pinning inhomogeneity  $S_l - S_u$  and hence to the shift of  $C$ . This process should end when sufficiently stable domain patterns form at both

surfaces of the sample.

The observed variation of  $C$  (Fig. 3) seems to confirm the above considerations and shows that at sufficiently large  $H_p$ ,  $S_l - S_u$  is not constant as assumed in calculating  $C$  and  $H_c$  shown in Fig. 1. However any increase in  $S_l S_u$  or  $S_u$  should slow down the decrease of  $H_c$  with  $H_p$  (Eq. (7)) which is consistent with the small hump of  $H_c$  observed around  $H_p = 10$  A/m but is inconsistent with its strong decrease centered around  $H_p \simeq 15$  A/m (Fig. 2). We note however that simultaneously the maximum magnetization  $M_m$  starts to decrease with  $H_p$  (Fig. 2). (This confirms our claim that at elevated  $H_p$  unfavourably oriented domains become efficient DW pinning centres.) At the same time  $H_c$  at a given frequency depends on  $M_m$ , the exact relation depending on dominant magnetization processes<sup>10</sup>). In particular for the employed range of  $M_m$  and  $f$ ,  $H_c \sim M_m^3$  has been established<sup>10</sup>). Subtracting this contribution of  $H_c$  from the experimental data we find that practically complete decrease of  $H_c$  above  $H_p = 14$  A/m is due to the decrease of  $M_m$  (Fig. 2). Moreover the corrected results indicate that at elevated  $H_p$ ,  $H_c$  would increase rather than decrease with  $H_p$  providing that  $M_m$  is kept constant.

The variation of the remanent magnetization  $M_r$  with  $H_p$  is qualitatively the same as that of  $H_c$  (Fig. 2). However the decrease of  $M_r$  with  $H_p$  is always faster than that of  $H_c$  because both the narrowing ( $H_c$ ) and slanting of the hysteresis loop (Fig. 3) decrease  $M_r$ . Since slanting occurs<sup>3,6</sup>) because of variation in  $\delta$  for different domains as well as due to the increase of the DW pinning strengths with  $H_p$ , the explanation of  $M_r$  always requires the exact knowledge of the domain structure.

## 5. Conclusion

The results presented above confirm that the reduction of  $H_c$  in magnetic ribbons carrying an electric current is associated with the perpendicular field  $H_p$  caused by the current flow. Calculation performed for a simplified model of the domain structure of nonmagnetostrictive ribbons describes well the experimental results for CoFeBSi ribbon at lower  $H_p$ . A more detailed domain structure is required in order to explain the behaviour observed at higher  $H_p$ . In spite of that the model is helpful because it can help to single out the details of the domain structure which limit the reduction of  $H_c$  and loss  $E$ . This may help the search for more suitable materials and/or the processing techniques which produce a more favourable domain structure.

At the same time the model shows that large reduction of  $H_c$  and  $E$  can only be obtained if the projection of the additional field on  $I$  is large. Because of this larger effects would be obtained by the use of longitudinal magnetic field  $H_l$  instead of  $H_p$ . Since  $H_l$  cannot stabilize the domains with unfavourable magnetizations, Eqs. (5)–(8) with  $P = H_l \cos \delta$  should apply over entire range of  $H_p$ . The preparation of composite materials with  $H_l$  replacing  $H_p$  is in progress.

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PORIJEKLO SMANJENJA GUBITAKA U FEROMAGNETU KOJIM TEČE  
STRUJA

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Predloženo je objašnjenje sniženja koercitivnog polja  $H_c$  i gubitaka  $E$  u magnet-skim trakama kojima teče električna struja. Račun proveden za pojednostavljenu domensku strukturu dobro opisuje rezultate mjerenja na slitini  $\text{Co}_{70.3}\text{Fe}_{4.7}\text{B}_{10}\text{Si}_{15}$



kod nižih vrijednosti struje. Rezultati mjerenja kod viših struja se također mogu objasniti modelom ako se uzme u obzir domenska struktura i utjecaj magnetskog polja  $H_p$  uzrokovanog strujom na tu strukturu. Na temelju modela i rezultata mjerenja predložen je novi tip mekih magnetskih materijala.