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Shielding and trapped field properties of large MgB$_2$ bulk

T. Ujiie$^a$, T. Naito$^a$, H. Fujishiro$^{a*}$, A. Figini Albisetti$^b$ and G. Giunchi$^c$

$^a$Faculty of Engineering, Iwate university, Morioka 020-8551, Japan
$^b$EDISON S.p.A., R&D Division, Foro Buonaparte 31, 20121 Milano, Italy
$^c$Materials science Consultant, via Teodosio 8, 20131 Milano, Italy

Abstract

We have studied the magnetic shielding properties of MgB$_2$ bulk fabricated by a reactive liquid Mg infiltration (Mg-RLI) method. The magnetic shielding profiles indicated partially field-penetrated areas at the bulk periphery with weaker pinning force at 38 K. We discuss about the superconductive inhomogeneity in the bulk by comparing the shielding profiles with trapped field ones by the subsequent zero-field-cooled magnetization (ZFCM) and the pulsed-field magnetization (PFM). The present method is advantageous to detect the inhomogeneity at the periphery of a large superconducting bulk.

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1. Introduction

A MgB$_2$ bulk is a metal superconductor with a critical temperature $T_c$=39 K, in which the problem of intergranular weak links can be ignored even for polycrystalline samples because of their long coherence length $\xi$, compared with RE-Ba-Cu-O (RE: rare earth element) bulks [1]. Therefore, the polycrystalline MgB$_2$ bulk can trap the higher magnetic field and is expected as a material replacing conventional superconductors.

To evaluate the superconductive homogeneity of the large bulk without destruction, a magneto-optical imaging (MOI) method [2] and a magnetoscan method [3] are used to visualize the distribution of the magnetic flux penetration and/or the critical current density $J_c$, both of which have the fundamental limitation for the measurement.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +81-19-621-6363; fax: +81-19-621-6363
E-mail address: fujishiro@iwate-u.ac.jp
On the other hand, $J_c$ is directly measured magnetically for a small piece cut from the bulk. A new non-destructive technique is desired to evaluate the superconductive homogeneity of a large MgB$_2$ bulk. In this study, we measured the magnetic shielding properties of a large MgB$_2$ bulk just below $T_c$. The trapped field profiles were also measured by the subsequent zero-field-cooled magnetization (ZFCM) and a pulsed-field magnetization (PFM), both of which were compared with the shielding profiles.

2. Experimental

The MgB$_2$ bulk (54 mm in diameter and 15 mm thickness), fabricated by a reactive liquid Mg infiltration (Mg-RLI) method and mounted in a stainless steel (SUS) ring using Stycast 2850GT, was set on a cold head of a Gifford-McMahon (GM) cycle helium refrigerator. To measure the shielding and ZFCM profiles, static magnetic field of 28 mT was applied by solenoid-type copper coil after the bulk was cooled to $T_s$=36, 37, 38 and 39 K. For the shielding experiment, two-dimensional magnetic shielding profiles were mapped 2 mm above the bulk surface using a Hall sensor under the magnetic field. For ZFCM, the trapped field profiles were measured after the applied magnetic field was decreased to zero. The PFM experiments were performed to the bulk cooled to 14 K. A magnetic pulse $B_{ext}$ up to 1.97 T with a rise time of 0.013 s and a duration of 0.15 s was applied to the bulk by flowing the pulsed current from a condenser bank. The trapped field $B_T$ at the center of the bulk surface was monitored by Hall sensor using a digital oscilloscope. Two-dimensional trapped field profiles were mapped on the bulk with 1 mm above the bulk surface. For each experiment, the time dependence of temperature $T(t)$ was also measured at the side of the SUS ring using Cernox thermometer.

3. Results and discussion

Figure 1 shows the magnetic shielding profiles on the bulk 2 mm above the bulk surface at various temperatures. The position of the bulk is shown in each figure. The profile at 38 K indicated that magnetic flux penetrated inhomogeneously from the bulk periphery, especially from the region A. However, the magnetic flux was shielded uniformly at lower temperatures of 36 and 37 K due to the increase of $J_c$ with decreasing temperature. For $T_s$= 39 K as shown in Fig. 1(d), the magnetic flux penetrated inside of the bulk. Figure 2 shows the cross-sections of the shielding profiles shown in Fig. 1 along the line of Y=0 mm. The flux did not penetrate to the inside of the bulk except for $T_s$=39 K. It should be noted that the inhomogeneous flux penetration can be observed around region A at 38 K.

Figure 3 presents the trapped field profiles on the bulk surface for ZFCM. The bulk can trap the magnetic flux

![Fig. 1 The magnetic shielding field profiles on the bulk surface at (a) $T_s$=36 K, (b) 37 K, (c) 38 K and (d) 39 K.](image1)

![Fig. 2 Cross-section of the shielding profiles. Open symbols were plotted along the line of Y=0 mm and solid symbols were plotted along the diagonal line shown in Fig. 1(c).](image2)
only for the bulk periphery below 36 K, which indicated that the applied magnetic field of \( B_{\text{ex}} = 28 \text{ mT} \) did not exceed the lower critical field \( H_{c1} \), and the bulk shielded the magnetic flux. For \( T_s = 37 \text{ K} \) and 38 K as shown in Figs. 3(a) and 3(b), the magnetic flux penetrated in the bulk and was preferentially trapped around region A, at which \( J_c \) was considered to be lower from the shielding measurement. For \( T_s = 39 \text{ K} \) as shown in Fig. 3(c), the magnetic flux penetrated and trapped at the center of the bulk, in which the trapped field profile was conical and the maximum trapped field was 1.2 mT.

Figure 4 shows the cross-sections of the trapped field profiles for ZFCM shown in Fig. 3. For \( T_s = 38 \text{ K} \), it is noticed that the trapped field at region A was relatively higher compared with the cross-section along the line of \( Y = 0 \text{ mm} \).

Figure 5(a) shows the trapped field \( B_T \) at the center of the bulk surface, as a function of the applied pulsed field \( B_{\text{ex}} \) for PFM. \( B_T \) increases for \( B_{\text{ex}} > 1.2 \text{ T} \), takes a maximum at \( B_{\text{ex}} = 1.79 \text{ T} \) and then decreases with increasing \( B_{\text{ex}} \). The decrease of \( B_T \) for \( B_{\text{ex}} = 1.97 \text{ T} \) is due to the large temperature rise in the bulk, which was caused by the viscous loss and pinning loss. The maximum \( B_T \) was 0.41 T in this study, which was smaller than that on the MgB\(_2\) bulk fabricated by a capsule method (\( B_T = 0.72 \text{ T} \) at \( T_s = 17 \text{ K} \)) [4]. Figure 5(b) depicts the time dependence of the temperature change at the side of the SUS ring for each applied field \( B_{\text{ex}} \). The temperature increases abruptly just after the pulse application and slowly decreases with increasing time. The magnitude of the maximum temperature rise increases with increasing \( B_{\text{ex}} \). The sharp temperature change results from the low specific heat and high thermal conductivity of the MgB\(_2\) bulk, compared with those for the REBaCuO bulk at operating temperatures.

Figure 6 shows the trapped field profiles on the bulk 1 mm above the bulk surface for various applied pulsed fields \( B_{\text{ex}} \). For lower \( B_{\text{ex}} \) of 0.93 T as shown in Fig. 6(a), the magnetic flux was preferentially trapped around the region A together with the bulk periphery. It is known that the magnetic flux is trapped at weaker pinning force.
Therefore, the critical current density $J_c$ around region A seems to be relatively lower in the bulk, and it is consistent with the results of shielding and ZFCM experiments shown in Figs. 1 and 3. For $B_{ex}=1.36$ T as shown in Fig. 6(b), the trapped field around the region A was relatively lower because the magnetic flux can be preferentially trapped at strong pinning region for relatively higher $B_{ex}$ [5]. The line-shaped disturbance at $Y=0.6$ mm comes from the noise of the apparatus. For $B_{ex}=1.79$ T and $1.97$ T as shown in Figs. 6(c) and 6(d), the trapped field profiles was nearly the cone-shaped ones, but the profile was deformed due to the existence of the region A. Figure 7 presents the cross-sections of the trapped field profiles for PFM shown in Fig. 6. The trapped field profile changes from concave to convex with increasing $B_{ex}$. For $B_{ex}=1.36$ T, it is found that the trapped field at region A was relatively lower compared with the cross-section along the line of $Y=0$ mm. The distribution of the pinning force obtained by PFM was consistent with that obtained from the shielding measurement, despite the time scale of the magnetic flux movement was fairly different. Thus, the shielding measurement is available for non-destructive evaluation technique of superconductive homogeneity at the periphery of the large bulk. However, this technique is not necessarily effective to evaluate the superconductive homogeneity inside of the bulk. In this case, the combination with the trapped field profiles by PFM and/or field cooled magnetization (FCM) is required.

4. Conclusion

We have studied the magnetic shielding profile and the trapped field profiles magnetized by ZFCM and PFM of large MgB$_2$ bulk fabricated by Mg-RLI method. For the shielding measurement, the magnetic flux penetrated inhomogeneously from the position with low $J_c$ just below $T_c$. For the subsequent ZFCM, the magnetic flux was trapped at this region. For PFM, at lower applied pulsed field, the magnetic flux was mainly trapped at same position, but at higher applied field, the magnetic flux was not trapped at this position. These results suggest that the shielding profiles can be used for non-destructive evaluation technique of inhomogeneity at periphery of the large bulk.

References