Upward Renormalization of Fluctuations in CsMnBr₃ with Increasing Temperature

C. Reich and P. Böni

Physik-Department E21, Technische Universität München, D-85747 Garching, Germany

B. Roessli

Laboratory for Neutron Scattering, Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich & Paul Scherrer Institut, CH-5232 Villigen, Switzerland

E. Rastelli

Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università and Istituto Nazionale per la Fisica della Materia, Parco Area delle Scienze 7/A, 43100 Parma, Italy

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The temperature dependence of the spin-wave gap in the triangular antiferromagnet CsMnBr₃ was studied above the three-dimensional ordering temperature $T_N = 8.3$ K along the main symmetry directions using inelastic neutron scattering. We find at T_N two gapped dispersive modes, whose energy increases with temperature. Moreover, the width of the spin-wave band along the [110] direction increases also. In a second session, polarization analysis was applied in order to extract explicitly the components with in-plane and out-of-plane character. The results show that both gapped modes (with $\parallel$ and $\perp$ symmetry) renormalize upwards with rising temperature. We show that this behavior is not compatible with spin-wave theory. In addition, we find a new magnetic anomaly in the paramagnetic phase.

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Low-dimensional magnetic systems presently attract significant attention because of their novel properties originating from quantum fluctuations. Hexagonal systems of the form ABX_3 (halides) such as CsMnBr₃ or CsNiCl₃ are of particular interest because they often show, in addition, effects of magnetic frustration depending on the dimensionality of the order parameter of the transition metal atoms. The frustration leads to a wide variety of ground states depending on range, sign of the interactions [1,2], and temperature. The evolution of the fluctuations with T is particularly interesting because the ABX_3 systems often show phase transitions from 3D order to lower dimensional order with increasing T that are accompanied by a renormalization of the spin waves. Mason *et al.* [3] have indeed observed the evolution of critical scattering in CsMnBr₃ at $T_N = 8.3$ K and determined the critical exponents that were ascribed to the chiral universality class [4].

The spin dynamics of CsMnBr₃ is interesting for several reasons. First of all, we wanted to determine if it is only the acoustic mode (from the three spin-wave modes) that renormalizes at T_N and contributes to the critical scattering as observed by Mason *et al.* [3]. For reasons that will be explained below, this task can be performed only by means of scattering of polarized neutrons. Second, our goal was to determine the T dependence of the energy gaps of the excitation spectra to explore the interplay between short-range exchange and long-range dipolar interactions on the spin dynamics. To our surprise, we find that the spin gaps increase with increasing T . While this result contradicts spin dynamics calculations

[2] and simulations [5] that predict a renormalization of the magnetic fluctuations to lower energy with increasing temperature, it is compatible with the work of Mason *et al.* [6].

CsMnBr₃ belongs to the hexagonal space group $P6_3/mmc$ (two atoms per unit cell) with $a = 7.609$ Å and $c = 6.52$ Å. The Mn^{2+} ions with spin $S = 5/2$ are responsible for the magnetic properties and are located on a plane hexagonal lattice, while along the c axis $MnBr^-$ units are stacked with an intrachain separation of $c/2 = 3.26$ Å. Because of the large moment, the spins can be considered to behave similar to classical spins. Below $T_N = 8.3$ K, three-dimensional long-range order is established with antiferromagnetic spin coupling along the c axis and a frustrated spin configuration in the basal plane. Hence, the magnetic zone center in the ordered phase occurs at $(\frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, 1)$. From spin-wave measurements, Falk *et al.* [7] found that magnetic properties are well described using an effective Hamiltonian with strong XY-like anisotropy:

$$H = J_{ab} \sum_{i,\delta} \vec{S}_i \cdot \vec{S}_{i+\delta} + 2J_c \sum_i \vec{S}_i \cdot \vec{S}_{i+1} + D \sum_i (S_i^z)^2, \quad (1)$$

where $\vec{\delta}$ is a vector joining the site i with its nearest neighbors in the a, b plane. The in- and out-of-plane exchange constants are given by $J_{ab} = 1.7 \pm 0.1$ μeV and $J_c = 0.89 \pm 0.01$ meV, respectively. The effective single-ion anisotropy parameter $D = 12 \pm 1$ μeV leads to a confinement of the spins to the ab plane. Recently, Hummel *et al.* [8] have shown that the in-plane anisotropy can be explained by the dipolar interactions

between the rather large magnetic moment of the Mn^{2+} ions.

In the three-dimensional antiferromagnetic ordered state, three dispersion branches are observed in the hexagonal plane [7]. One branch describes magnons with out-of-plane symmetry ($\perp$), whereas the two remaining magnons have in-plane polarization ($\parallel$). According to Hummel *et al.* [8], the optic character of the out-of-plane mode at the magnetic Brillouin zone center ($\frac{1}{3} \frac{1}{3} 1$) can be explained by the influence of dipolar interactions that lead to an energy gap in the $\perp$ mode.

The measurements were carried out with the triple-axis spectrometer TASP, located at the neutron spallation source SINQ at the Paul Scherrer Institute, Switzerland. A single crystal of CsMnBr_3 (sample mosaic 1.5° , dimensions $7 \times 7 \times 3 \text{ mm}^3$) was mounted inside an “orange” flow cryostat that has a temperature stability of better than 0.1 K. The crystal was aligned in the $(h h l)$ -scattering plane (setup with unpolarized neutrons) and in the $(h 0 l)$ -scattering plane (setup for polarization analysis). The spectrometer was mostly operated in the constant final energy mode with $k_f = 1.64 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ using a pyrolytic graphite filter to remove higher-order neutrons. Furthermore, an $80'$ collimator was installed in the incident beam between monochromator and sample and a horizontally focusing analyzer was used.

A first series of constant- $\mathbf{Q}$ scans were performed along the $[001]$ -crystallographic direction in order to study the behavior of the energy gap at the antiferromagnetic zone center in the paramagnetic phase $T > 8.3 \text{ K}$. The raw data in Fig. 1 shows that the excitations are very well defined. Remarkably, the peak position of the magnetic modes shifts to higher energy with increasing T .

In order to interpret the data quantitatively, we examine the double-differential cross section for unpolarized neutrons:

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{d\Omega d\omega} \propto \sum_{\alpha\beta} (\delta_{\alpha\beta} - \hat{Q}_\alpha \hat{Q}_\beta) S^{\alpha\beta}(\mathbf{Q}, \omega), \quad (2)$$

where $\delta_{\alpha\beta}$ is the Kronecker symbol, α, β are the Cartesian coordinates x, y, z , $(\mathbf{Q}, \omega)$ denote the momentum and energy transfer from neutron to sample and $\hat{Q} = \mathbf{Q}/|\mathbf{Q}|$. The first term in Eq. (2) is a selection rule that implies that only spin components perpendicular to the scattering vector contribute to the neutron scattering

FIG. 1. Fits of scan data around (001) as measured at $T = 20$ and 40 K .

cross section. Therefore, measurements with $\mathbf{Q}$ along the c axis reveal only in-plane fluctuations.

We find that the line shape of the observed excitations is best described by means of a scattering function based on a damped-harmonic-oscillator (DHO) convoluted with the resolution function of the spectrometer:

$$S(\mathbf{Q}, \omega) = \frac{[n(\omega) + 1]}{\pi} \chi(\mathbf{Q}) \frac{2\omega\Gamma_q\Omega_q^2}{(\omega^2 - \Omega_q^2)^2 + 4\omega^2\Gamma_q^2}. \quad (3)$$

The expression contains the following factors: The term for detailed balance $[n(\omega) + 1] = [1 - e^{-(\hbar\omega)/(k_B T)}]^{-1}$, the damping of the excitations Γ_q , and the renormalized dispersion $\Omega_q = \sqrt{\omega_q^2 + \Gamma_q^2}$. ω_q is the frequency of a damped oscillation. In our description, Ω_q is the physically relevant quantity [9]. The wavelength dependent susceptibility $\chi(\mathbf{Q})$ was treated as a normalization constant during the fitting procedure. The solid lines in Fig. 1 show that the data is well represented by Eq. (3).

The q and T dependence of the dispersion along $[001]$ is shown in Fig. 2 demonstrating clearly that the energy gap of the magnetic modes indeed increases with increasing T above T_N . It is only at 40 K that the linewidth Γ_q exceeds the energy ω_q ; i.e., below 40 K the excitations are well defined.

Similar measurements of the in-plane modes along the $[110]$ direction demonstrate also that the energy gap of the mode increases. The data was analyzed again using a damped-harmonic oscillator [Eq. (3)] yielding the energy of the modes that are plotted in Fig. 3 for $T = 9, 17.5$, and 40 K . Clearly, the energy of the magnetic excitations increases throughout the zone for temperatures up to 40 K . Moreover, the spin-wave band remains broad demonstrating the persistence of strong correlations within the plane. It is only at 40 K that the dispersion becomes small as expected for one-dimensional spin chains.

We note, however, that the dispersion branch measured at $(1 + \zeta, 1 + \zeta, 1)$ is clearly shifted towards higher energy compared with the excitations measured at $(\zeta \zeta 1)$.

FIG. 2. Dispersion of the in-plane modes along the $[001]$ direction for $T = 20, 25, 30, 35$, and 40 K . For means of comparison, the solid line shows the dispersion relation (in-plane mode) of the ordered state calculated according to Falk *et al.* [7]. We note that for $\mathbf{Q}$ along $[001]$ the out-of-plane modes are not visible in the inelastic neutron spectrum.

following, we show that the upward renormalization cannot be explained by linear spin-wave theory.

We recall that in CsMnBr_3 the ratio $J_c/J_{ab} \approx 460$ of the exchange parameters shows that the magnetic interactions along the c axis are significantly stronger than within the ab plane. Therefore, it seems legitimate to

us to treat CsMnBr_3 as an example of a quasi-one-dimensional antiferromagnet. For a one-dimensional Heisenberg antiferromagnet with nearest neighbor exchange J and including dipolar interactions, we find with linear spin-wave theory for the dispersion of the magnetic excitations

$$\omega(q_c) = \sqrt{[2|J|S(1 - \cos q_c) + 2\omega S f(q_c)][2|J|S(1 + \cos q_c) + 2\omega S g(q_c)]}, \quad (5)$$

with $S = 5/2$, $f(q_c) = -\sum (-1)^n/n^3(1 - \cos nq_c)$, $g(q_c) = -\sum 1/n^3[(-1)^n + 2\cos nq_c]$, and $\omega = (g\mu_B)^2/(c/2)^3 = 0.006$ meV, where $c/2$ is the nearest neighbor distance.

The temperature dependent part of the spectrum is obtained from perturbation theory and yields after some lengthy calculations the temperature dependent renormalization of the energy gap at $q_c = \pi$:

$$\Delta\omega_\pi = -\sqrt{\frac{2\omega|J|}{g(\pi)}} \frac{1}{\pi} \int_0^\pi \frac{(1 - \cos q)[g(\pi)(2 + \cos q) + g(q) - f(\pi - q)]n_q}{\sqrt{[1 - \cos q + (\omega/|J|)f(q)][1 + \cos q + (\omega/|J|)g(q)]}} dq, \quad (6)$$

where n_q is the Bose occupation number. Equation (6) provides a downwards thermal renormalization. For instance, numerical evaluation gives $\Delta\omega_\pi = -0.094$, -0.343 , -0.640 , and -0.957 meV for $T = 10$, 20 , 30 , and 40 K, respectively. Analogous calculations have been performed at the same temperatures for $q_c \rightarrow 0$ and for $q_c = \pi/2$ giving $\Delta\omega_{q_c \rightarrow 0} = -0.026q_c$, $-0.129q_c$, $-0.313q_c$, and $-0.549q_c$ meV, and $\Delta\omega_{\pi/2} = -0.030$, -0.145 , -0.341 , and -0.592 meV, respectively.

The linear upward renormalization of the spin-wave gap in CsMnBr_3 is unusual. Generally, in a magnetically ordered system, the gap decreases with increasing temperature. This is understandable because the gap, usually entered by a single-ion easy-axis anisotropy term in the Hamiltonian, renormalizes similar to the sublattice magnetization [2]. For instance, this behavior has been observed in K_2NiF_4 [2,11] or Li_2CuO_2 [12]. Even in frustrated systems such as $\text{Sr}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_4\text{Cl}_2$ [13], where the magnetic ordering of the two subsystems (Cu_I and Cu_{II}) originates from quantum fluctuations that lift the classical degeneracy owing to the frustration of the intersubsystem interactions, giving an example of *order out of disorder* [14], the "quantum" gap renormalizes downwards at increasing temperature, as shown in Fig. 2(b) of [13].

The only examples of upward renormalization were found in the $S = 1$ system CsNiCl_3 due to the Haldane gap [15] and in the square [16] and triangular [17] planar models, where two-component classical spins interact via dipole forces. For the latter (dipolar) systems, the ground state is "columnar" with alternating rows of parallel spins and ferromagnetic spins for the square lattice and the triangular lattice, respectively. In both cases, order by thermal disorder lifts the continuous degeneracy of the classical ground state and the elementary excitation spectrum becomes gapped at finite temperature, and the gap is found to increase linearly with temperature. However, the results for the quantum linear antiferromagnetic chain with three-component spins coupled by a strong exchange and a (weak) dipole interaction show that the presence of

dipole interaction does not assure upward renormalization at increasing temperature. For this reason, we think that the upward renormalization of the magnetic excitation energy we have observed in CsMnBr_3 is a unique behavior never recorded before in magnetic systems with half-integer spins that cannot be understood in the frame of spin-wave theory. In particular, one has to take the in-plane correlations into account in order to explain the strong dispersion of the in-plane modes above T_N .

We also observe near $T_z = 14$ K a merging of the spin-wave gaps for the in-plane and out-of-plane modes. If the confinement of the spins to the hexagonal plane was caused by dipolar interactions only, we would expect the transition to take place at T_N . In contrast, the degeneracy vanishes at T_z indicating that the single-ion anisotropy D persists at least up to T_z .

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