JSRT JOURNAL
JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

PAGES: 1-10
18/01/2023
SPECIAL EDITION

High-Temperature Superconductors: Mechanisms and Future Prospects

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ABSTRACT

High-temperature superconductors (HTS) have revolutionized condensed matter physics and materials science, offering the potential for energy-efficient technologies, high-performance computing, and advanced medical applications. Unlike conventional superconductors, which require cryogenic temperatures near absolute zero, HTS operate at relatively higher temperatures, significantly reducing cooling costs and expanding practical applications. However, the exact mechanisms governing high-temperature superconductivity remain an open question, with various competing theories, including strong electron correlations, spin fluctuations, and unconventional Cooper pairing.

This article provides an in-depth review of the fundamental mechanisms underlying HTS, comparing them with conventional BCS superconductors. It explores recent breakthroughs in HTS materials, including cuprates, iron-based superconductors, and novel nickelates, highlighting their unique structural and electronic properties. Advances in experimental techniques, such as high-resolution spectroscopy, atomic-scale imaging, and high-pressure synthesis, have led to a deeper understanding of HTS behavior and the discovery of new superconducting phases.

Beyond fundamental research, HTS have demonstrated transformative potential in various applications, including lossless power transmission, superconducting quantum computing, and high-field magnet technology for MRI and Maglev systems. However, several challenges, such as material synthesis, stability, and the need for scalable manufacturing, hinder widespread adoption.

This review examines these challenges and discusses future research directions, including room-temperature superconductivity and the integration of HTS into existing electronic infrastructures. By addressing both theoretical and experimental perspectives, this article aims to provide a comprehensive outlook on the future of high-temperature superconductors and their role in advancing modern technology.

Keywords: Superconductors, HTS, Cuprates

I. Introduction

Superconductivity, the phenomenon where a material exhibits zero electrical resistance below a critical temperature (Tc), has fascinated physicists and engineers for over a century. Since the discovery of superconductivity in mercury by Heike Kamerlingh Onnes in 1911, research in this field has advanced significantly, leading to practical applications in quantum computing, power transmission, and medical imaging. However, early superconductors required extremely low temperatures, near absolute zero, making them impractical for widespread technological deployment. The discovery of high-temperature superconductors (HTS) in the late 1980s revolutionized the field, offering new pathways for energy-efficient systems and next-generation electronics.

HTS materials, primarily based on copper oxides (cuprates) and iron-based superconductors, exhibit superconducting properties at temperatures much higher than conventional superconductors, sometimes exceeding the boiling point of liquid nitrogen (77K). This breakthrough significantly reduced the cost and complexity of superconducting technologies by making cooling more accessible. Despite this progress, the fundamental mechanisms underlying high-temperature superconductivity remain an open question. Unlike conventional superconductors, which follow the Bardeen-Cooper-Schrieffer (BCS) theory of electron pairing through lattice vibrations (phonons), HTS exhibit strong electron correlations, spin fluctuations, and unconventional Cooper pairing mechanisms, making their theoretical framework highly complex and a subject of ongoing debate.

Recent discoveries, including nickelate superconductors and advancements in material synthesis, have further expanded the field, challenging existing models and opening new possibilities. Experimental techniques such as angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy (ARPES), neutron scattering, and scanning tunneling microscopy (STM) have provided deeper insights into the electronic structure and pairing mechanisms of HTS materials. Additionally, the quest for room-temperature superconductivity has gained significant momentum, with recent breakthroughs in hydrogen-based superconductors under extreme pressure raising new possibilities for future applications.

Beyond theoretical interest, HTS materials have profound practical implications. They are essential for energy-efficient power grids, superconducting magnets in MRI machines, and next-generation quantum computing technologies. However, several challenges, including difficulties in material fabrication, stability, and large-scale manufacturing, must be addressed before HTS can be integrated into mainstream technology.

This article provides a comprehensive review of high-temperature superconductors, covering their fundamental mechanisms, recent material discoveries, experimental advances, and technological applications. Additionally, it explores current challenges and future prospects in the quest for room-temperature superconductivity. By bridging theoretical insights with experimental progress, this work aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of HTS and their role in shaping the future of modern science and technology.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The field of high-temperature superconductors (HTS) has seen extensive research over the past few decades, leading to significant advancements in theoretical understanding, material discovery, and practical applications. This section reviews five key studies that have shaped our understanding of HTS, focusing on their mechanisms, experimental breakthroughs, and potential applications.

1. Mechanisms of High-Temperature Superconductivity

One of the most significant challenges in HTS research is understanding the underlying mechanism of superconductivity. Anderson (1987) proposed the resonating valence bond (RVB) theory, suggesting that strong electron correlations in cuprate superconductors play a crucial role in their high Tc. Unlike the conventional BCS theory, which attributes superconductivity to phonon-mediated Cooper pair formation, HTS materials exhibit unconventional pairing mechanisms that involve spin fluctuations and strong electronic interactions (Norman & Pines, 2003). These studies highlight the complexity of HTS and the need for new theoretical frameworks beyond the BCS model.

2. Advances in Material Discovery and Synthesis

Since the discovery of Yttrium Barium Copper Oxide (YBCO) in 1987, several HTS materials have been identified, including iron-based superconductors and, more recently, nickelates. Hosono et al. (2008) introduced iron-based superconductors, which challenged the dominance of cuprates and provided a new platform for studying HTS mechanisms. More recently, nickelates have been proposed as a new class of superconductors with similar electronic structures to cuprates, though their exact pairing mechanism remains under investigation (Li et al., 2019). These findings demonstrate the evolving nature of HTS materials and the ongoing search for new superconducting compounds.

3. Experimental Techniques for Probing HTS Properties

Advancements in experimental techniques have significantly contributed to the understanding of HTS materials. Angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy (ARPES) has been instrumental in mapping the electronic structure of cuprates, revealing their unconventional superconducting gap symmetry (Damascelli, Shen, & Hussain, 2003). Similarly, neutron scattering studies have provided insights into spin fluctuations and their role in Cooper pair formation (Tranquada et al., 1995). These experimental breakthroughs have been critical in refining theoretical models and understanding the microscopic properties of HTS materials.

4. Applications of High-Temperature Superconductors

HTS materials have found applications in various fields, including power transmission, quantum computing, and medical imaging. Superconducting magnetic levitation has been explored for frictionless transportation systems, with YBCO-based superconductors enabling magnetic levitation trains (Schwartz, 2012). Additionally, superconducting quantum interference devices (SQUIDs) have been developed using HTS materials for high-sensitivity magnetometry applications, enhancing the detection of weak magnetic fields in biomedical imaging and geophysical studies. These studies highlight the practical significance of HTS beyond fundamental research.

5. Challenges and Future Prospects in HTS Research

Despite the progress, several challenges hinder the widespread application of HTS. One of the major limitations is the brittleness and complex fabrication of HTS materials, which restricts their scalability for industrial applications (Lee et al., 2006). Furthermore, the search for room-temperature superconductors remains a key focus, with recent discoveries in hydrogen-based superconductors at extreme pressures showing promising results (Drozdov et al., 2019). The future of HTS research lies in the development of more robust materials that can operate under ambient conditions without requiring extreme cooling.

4.1. Cooper Pairing in Conventional vs. High-Temperature Superconductors

BCS Theory and Its Limitations for HTS

The BCS theory, formulated in 1957 by Bardeen, Cooper, and Schrieffer, explains superconductivity in conventional materials by describing how electrons form Cooper pairs due to attractive interactions mediated by phonons (lattice vibrations). These Cooper pairs condense into a macroscopic quantum state, leading to zero electrical resistance. The BCS theory successfully predicts the superconducting transition temperature (Tc) and describes the energy gap opening at the Fermi surface.

However, this theory fails to explain HTS for several reasons:

1. **High Transition Temperatures** – The BCS theory predicts that Tc is limited by the strength of electron-phonon interactions, yet cuprates and iron-based superconductors exhibit transition temperatures far beyond this limit.
2. **Unconventional Pairing Symmetry** – While conventional superconductors exhibit isotropic (s-wave) pairing, HTS materials, particularly cuprates, display d-wave symmetry, suggesting a different pairing mechanism.
3. **Strong Electron Correlations** – Unlike conventional superconductors, where electron interactions are weak, HTS materials exhibit strong electronic correlations, indicating that phonon-mediated pairing alone cannot account for superconductivity.

Differences in Pairing Mechanisms

The primary distinction between conventional and HTS materials lies in the nature of the pairing mechanism. In HTS, the dominant interactions involve magnetic fluctuations and strong electron correlations rather than phonon-mediated interactions. Cuprates, for example, exhibit strong antiferromagnetic correlations, which are believed to play a crucial role in pairing electrons. Similarly, iron-based superconductors show evidence of orbital-dependent pairing mechanisms, indicating a more complex interplay between electronic and magnetic interactions.

4.2. Role of Electron-Phonon Interactions

Phonon-Mediated Superconductivity

In conventional superconductors, the interaction between electrons and lattice vibrations (phonons) is responsible for the formation of Cooper pairs. This mechanism, described by the Migdal-Eliashberg theory, explains how phonons create an effective attraction between electrons, leading to superconductivity. The strength of this interaction determines the superconducting gap and transition temperature.

Experimental Evidence Supporting or Challenging This Mechanism

In HTS materials, the role of electron-phonon interactions remains debated. Some key experimental findings include:

- **Isotope Effect** – In conventional superconductors, the isotope effect (where Tc scales with the atomic mass of lattice ions) provides strong evidence for phonon-mediated pairing. However, in cuprates, the isotope effect is weak or absent, suggesting that phonons play a minimal role in the pairing mechanism.
- **Angle-Resolved Photoemission Spectroscopy (ARPES)** – ARPES studies on cuprates indicate that the superconducting gap follows a d-wave symmetry, which is inconsistent with a purely phonon-driven mechanism.

- **Inelastic Neutron Scattering** – Neutron scattering experiments reveal strong magnetic fluctuations in HTS materials, suggesting that spin interactions rather than phonons mediate superconductivity.

While phonons may still contribute to superconductivity in HTS, they are unlikely to be the primary driver, unlike in conventional superconductors.

4.3. Magnetic and Electronic Interactions in Cuprates

Importance of Strong Electron Correlations

HTS materials, particularly cuprates, belong to the category of strongly correlated electron systems. These materials exhibit:

- **Mott Insulating Behavior** – Despite having partially filled electronic bands, undoped cuprates behave as insulators due to strong electron-electron repulsion. This contradicts conventional band theory and suggests that electronic interactions dominate their physics.
- **Charge Transfer Effects** – The presence of oxygen p-orbitals in cuprates introduces additional complexities, where electron hopping between copper and oxygen atoms affects the overall electronic structure.

Spin Fluctuations and Their Impact on Superconductivity

One of the leading theories for HTS is the spin-fluctuation-mediated pairing mechanism. In this model:

- **Antiferromagnetic Order in Parent Compounds** – Cuprates in their undoped state exhibit strong antiferromagnetic order, with electron spins aligning in an alternating pattern.
- **Doping-Induced Superconductivity** – Upon doping, long-range antiferromagnetic order is suppressed, and superconductivity emerges, indicating a link between spin interactions and pairing.
- **Neutron Scattering Evidence** – Experiments show that magnetic fluctuations persist even in the superconducting phase, further supporting the idea that spin excitations play a role in pairing.

Iron-based superconductors also exhibit significant spin fluctuations, suggesting that this mechanism may be common among various HTS families.

4.4. The Role of Unconventional Pairing Symmetries

d-Wave Pairing in Cuprates

The discovery of d-wave pairing symmetry in cuprates was a major breakthrough in HTS research. Key features include:

- **Nodal Structure** – Unlike conventional s-wave superconductors, where the energy gap is uniform, d-wave superconductors have nodes where the gap goes to zero.
- **Phase-Sensitive Experiments** – Josephson junction experiments and ARPES measurements confirm the presence of a d-wave superconducting gap in cuprates.
- **Implications for Pairing Mechanism** – The d-wave symmetry suggests that pairing is mediated by repulsive interactions, supporting the spin-fluctuation theory.

Possible p-Wave and s± Pairing in Iron-Based Superconductors

Iron-based superconductors exhibit different pairing symmetries compared to cuprates:

- **s± Pairing** – In this model, the superconducting gap has opposite signs on different Fermi surface pockets, which is consistent with spin-fluctuation-mediated pairing.
- **p-Wave Pairing in Some Systems** – Some HTS candidates, particularly those involving topological superconductors, exhibit evidence of p-wave pairing, which is linked to exotic quasiparticles such as Majorana fermions.

The diversity of pairing symmetries across different HTS materials suggests that multiple mechanisms may contribute to high-temperature superconductivity, making it one of the most intriguing problems in condensed matter physics.

V. RECENT ADVANCES IN HIGH-TEMPERATURE SUPERCONDUCTORS

High-temperature superconductors (HTS) continue to be an active area of research due to their potential applications in energy transmission, quantum computing, and magnetic levitation. Over the past few decades, significant advancements have been made in discovering new superconducting materials, refining experimental techniques, and developing novel theoretical models to explain the underlying mechanisms of HTS. This section explores the latest developments in HTS, focusing on newly discovered materials, cutting-edge experimental approaches, and emerging theoretical frameworks.

5.1. New Materials and Compositions

Iron-Based Superconductors

Since the discovery of iron-based superconductors (FeSCs) in 2008, they have provided a new class of HTS materials beyond cuprates. The key families of FeSCs include:

- **1111-type (e.g., LaFeAsO)** – The first discovered FeSC, featuring a layered structure with FeAs planes responsible for superconductivity.
- **122-type (e.g., $BaFe_2As_2$)** – Exhibits superconductivity upon doping or pressure-induced structural modifications.
- **11-type (e.g., FeSe)** – Notable for its superconductivity at ambient pressure, with transition temperatures enhanced under applied pressure or intercalation with other elements.

FeSCs differ from cuprates in their superconducting mechanism, as they exhibit multiple Fermi surface pockets, leading to unconventional pairing symmetries such as s±-wave. Unlike cuprates, which have strong electron correlations, FeSCs display a delicate balance between magnetism and superconductivity, making them an important system for studying HTS mechanisms.

Nickelates and Their Superconducting Properties

Nickel-based superconductors, or nickelates, have recently emerged as a promising class of HTS materials. Their discovery was inspired by the structural and electronic similarities to cuprates, particularly in their layered perovskite structure. Key features of nickelates include:

- **Infinite-layer nickelates (e.g., $Nd_6Ni_5O_{12}$)** – Exhibits superconductivity at low temperatures, with electronic structures resembling those of cuprates.
- **Electronic Hybridization** – Unlike FeSCs and cuprates, nickelates show a mixed valence state, where both Ni^{2+} and Ni^{3+} contribute to the conduction process.
- **Challenges in Material Synthesis** – Nickelates require high-pressure synthesis methods to stabilize their superconducting phase, limiting their large-scale applicability.

Despite these challenges, nickelates provide an exciting avenue for studying HTS in transition metal oxides beyond cuprates.

Graphene-Based Superconductivity

Recent studies have demonstrated superconductivity in graphene-based systems, opening new possibilities for HTS research. The most notable discovery is:

- **Magic-Angle Twisted Bilayer Graphene (MATBG)** – When two graphene layers are stacked with a twist angle of approximately 1.1°, they exhibit unconventional superconductivity similar to cuprates.
- **Dirac Fermions and Correlated States** – The electronic structure of MATBG features flat bands, leading to strong electron correlations that facilitate superconductivity.

- **Tunable Superconducting Phases** – By applying external electric fields or pressure, researchers can manipulate the superconducting state, making graphene-based systems highly versatile for studying fundamental HTS physics.

These advances in new materials have significantly expanded the landscape of HTS research, providing alternative platforms to investigate unconventional superconductivity.

5.2. Advances in Experimental Techniques

High-Pressure Synthesis Methods

To explore new superconducting phases, high-pressure synthesis techniques have become essential. These methods allow the stabilization of metastable materials and the discovery of superconducting states that are inaccessible at ambient conditions. Key techniques include:

- **Diamond Anvil Cell (DAC) Experiments** – Used to apply extreme pressures (>100 GPa) to materials, modifying their electronic and structural properties.
- **High-Pressure Annealing** – Enables the synthesis of superconducting phases in nickelates and hydrides, crucial for achieving high Tc.
- **Chemical Doping Under Pressure** – Allows fine-tuning of superconducting properties by introducing new elements under high-pressure conditions.

These techniques have led to the discovery of new superconductors, including high-Tc hydrides such as H_3S and LaH_{10}, which exhibit superconductivity above 200 K.

Advanced Spectroscopy Techniques for Probing HTS

Spectroscopic methods provide critical insights into the electronic structure, pairing mechanisms, and symmetry of HTS. Some of the most impactful techniques include:

- **Angle-Resolved Photoemission Spectroscopy (ARPES)** – Maps the Fermi surface and superconducting gap structure, confirming the d-wave symmetry in cuprates and the s± pairing in FeSCs.
- **Scanning Tunneling Microscopy (STM)** – Provides atomic-scale imaging of superconducting vortices and electronic density-of-states variations.
- **Resonant Inelastic X-ray Scattering (RIXS)** – Probes collective excitations such as spin fluctuations, crucial for understanding HTS mechanisms.

These spectroscopic advancements have significantly enhanced our understanding of HTS, revealing the role of electron interactions, spin fluctuations, and unconventional pairing symmetries.

Atomic-Scale Imaging of Superconducting States

Recent progress in atomic-scale imaging has provided unprecedented insights into the local properties of superconducting materials. Techniques such as:

- **Quasiparticle Interference (QPI) Imaging** – Used to map electronic scattering in HTS materials, revealing hidden orders and symmetry-breaking effects.
- **Fourier Transform STM** – Captures the spatial variation of the superconducting gap, offering clues about inhomogeneities in HTS materials.
- **Real-Space Visualization of Vortex Lattices** – Enables direct observation of vortex matter in superconductors, crucial for developing practical applications like superconducting magnets and quantum computing.

These high-resolution techniques have provided new perspectives on the fundamental nature of HTS, allowing researchers to probe electronic interactions at the nanoscale.

5.3. Novel Theoretical Models

Machine Learning and Computational Models for HTS Prediction

The application of machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) in HTS research has revolutionized material discovery and theoretical modeling. Key advancements include:

- **Data-Driven Discovery** – ML algorithms analyze vast datasets to predict new superconducting materials with optimal Tc.
- **Neural Network-Based Band Structure Calculations** – Accelerates the identification of promising HTS candidates by simulating electronic band structures.
- **Quantum Monte Carlo and Density Functional Theory (DFT) Simulations** – Provide accurate descriptions of electron correlations, crucial for understanding HTS mechanisms.

ML-driven approaches have already led to the identification of new superconductors, highlighting their potential in accelerating future discoveries.

Beyond BCS: Strongly Correlated Electron Theories

While BCS theory successfully describes conventional superconductors, HTS materials require alternative theoretical frameworks. Some of the leading models include:

- **Hubbard and t-J Models** – Describe the strong electron correlations in cuprates, emphasizing the role of antiferromagnetic interactions in pairing.
- **Spin-Fluctuation Theories** – Propose that superconductivity in HTS materials arises from spin-mediated interactions rather than phonons.
- **Multi-Orbital Models for FeSCs** – Consider the complex interplay of orbital degrees of freedom, explaining the diversity of pairing symmetries.

These theoretical advancements continue to refine our understanding of HTS, offering new perspectives on pairing mechanisms and material design.

5.4. Future Prospects for Commercialization

Challenges in Cost-Effective HTS Material Synthesis

Despite their potential, the commercialization of HTS faces significant barriers, primarily in material fabrication and scalability. Challenges include:

- **Complex Manufacturing Processes** – The need for high-purity thin films and multilayer structures increases production costs.
- **Brittle Nature of HTS Ceramics** – Unlike ductile metals, HTS materials (e.g., YBCO, BSCCO) are brittle, making them difficult to manufacture into flexible wires and tapes.
- **Material Stability and Degradation** – Exposure to moisture and mechanical stress can degrade HTS performance over time.

Ongoing research aims to develop **cost-effective fabrication techniques**, such as:

- **Chemical Solution Deposition (CSD)** – A scalable method for producing high-quality HTS films.
- **Artificial Pinning Centers** – Enhancing HTS performance under high magnetic fields by introducing nanostructured defects.
- **Doping Strategies** – Modifying HTS compositions to improve transition temperatures and mechanical strength.

Integration with Existing Electronic and Power Systems

For HTS to be widely adopted, seamless integration with existing infrastructure is necessary. Key areas of development include:

- **Hybrid HTS-Copper Power Grids** – Combining HTS with conventional conductors to create efficient and reliable power networks.
- **Superconducting Fault Current Limiters (SFCLs)** – Devices that protect electrical grids from surges and faults, enhancing grid stability.
- **HTS in Electric Aircraft and Space Exploration** – Lightweight superconducting motors could revolutionize aviation by improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions.

As production costs decrease and scalability improves, HTS is expected to become a mainstream technology in various sectors, driving innovations in **energy, computing, healthcare, and transportation**.

5.5. Understanding the Underlying Mechanisms

Unresolved Theoretical Questions

Despite decades of research, the fundamental mechanisms driving high-temperature superconductivity remain incompletely understood. Unlike conventional superconductors, which are well-described by Bardeen-Cooper-Schrieffer (BCS) theory, HTS materials exhibit:

- **Unconventional pairing mechanisms** – d-wave pairing in cuprates and s± symmetry in iron-based superconductors suggest interactions beyond electron-phonon coupling.
- **Strong electron correlations** – Unlike in BCS superconductors, Coulomb interactions and spin fluctuations play a crucial role in HTS.
- **Pseudogap phase** – The presence of a mysterious pseudogap state in cuprates remains one of the biggest unsolved puzzles in condensed matter physics.

Addressing these questions requires **advanced theoretical models** and **high-precision experimental techniques** to probe the microscopic interactions in HTS materials.

Need for More Experimental Validation

Theoretical models of HTS require rigorous experimental validation. However, obtaining direct evidence of pairing mechanisms and interaction effects is challenging due to:

- **Complex multi-band structures** in iron-based superconductors.
- **Short coherence lengths** that make probing Cooper pairs difficult.
- **Strong competition between superconductivity and other phases** (e.g., antiferromagnetism, charge density waves).

Cutting-edge experimental techniques such as **angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy (ARPES), scanning tunneling microscopy (STM), and ultrafast spectroscopy** are being used to gain deeper insights into HTS behavior.

5.6. Overcoming Technological Barriers

Engineering Solutions for Large-Scale HTS Implementation

For HTS to be integrated into practical applications, several engineering challenges must be addressed:

- **Cryogenic cooling limitations** – While HTS operates at higher temperatures than conventional superconductors, maintaining them at liquid nitrogen temperatures (77 K) still requires costly cooling systems.
- **Mechanical and structural challenges** – HTS materials are brittle and require sophisticated fabrication techniques to be used in practical devices.
- **High-cost superconducting cables** – Current HTS cables are expensive due to complex manufacturing processes, limiting their adoption in power grids.

To overcome these barriers, researchers are focusing on:

- **Developing flexible, high-performance superconducting tapes** that can be integrated into existing infrastructure.
- **Innovating cryogenic systems** to reduce cooling costs and improve operational efficiency.
- **Creating hybrid HTS-copper power systems** that balance cost and performance for energy transmission.

Improving Critical Current Densities and Vortex Pinning

One of the key performance metrics of an HTS material is its **critical current density (Jc)**—the maximum current it can carry without losing superconductivity. HTS materials often suffer from:

- **Low Jc under high magnetic fields**, limiting their applications in high-power devices.
- **Flux creep and motion of vortices**, which can lead to energy dissipation and reduced performance.

To improve Jc, researchers are developing:

- **Artificial pinning centers** – Nanostructured defects introduced to trap vortices and enhance current-carrying capacity.
- **Multilayer superconducting structures** – Layered designs that optimize current flow and minimize resistance.

By optimizing these properties, HTS could become more viable for large-scale technological applications, including power grids, transportation, and computing.

5.7. Future Research Directions

Room-Temperature Superconductivity: How Close Are We?

The ultimate goal of superconductivity research is to discover materials that can operate at **room temperature (300 K) and ambient pressure**. Several breakthroughs suggest this goal may be within reach:

- **Hydrogen-based superconductors** – Materials like H3S and LaH10 have demonstrated superconductivity above 250 K under extreme pressures.
- **Novel carbon-based superconductors** – Research on graphene and doped fullerene structures hints at possible room-temperature superconductivity.
- **Machine learning-driven materials discovery** – AI is being used to predict new HTS candidates with optimized properties.

However, the challenge remains to find materials that can achieve room-temperature superconductivity under **practical conditions** without requiring ultra-high pressures.

Potential Breakthroughs in HTS Physics

Future research will likely focus on:

- **Identifying new superconducting families** beyond cuprates and iron-based superconductors.
- **Understanding the interplay of electronic, magnetic, and lattice interactions** in HTS materials.
- **Developing hybrid superconducting systems** that integrate HTS with other quantum materials.

Exciting directions include:

- **Topological superconductivity** – Exploring HTS materials that support exotic quasiparticles (e.g., Majorana fermions) for quantum computing.

- **Artificially engineered superconducting heterostructures** – Designing multi-layered materials with enhanced superconducting properties.
- **High-entropy alloys and unconventional superconductors** – Investigating materials with mixed-element compositions to discover novel superconducting phases.

VI. CONCLUSION

High-temperature superconductors (HTS) have emerged as a pivotal area in condensed matter physics, offering transformative potential for energy transmission, advanced computing, and medical applications. In our research, we comprehensively examined the unconventional mechanisms that govern HTS—highlighting differences from conventional BCS superconductivity by emphasizing the roles of electron correlations, spin fluctuations, and lattice dynamics, as well as the contributions of electron-phonon interactions and magnetic effects in cuprates and iron-based superconductors. We further explored recent breakthroughs in novel materials, including iron-based superconductors, nickelates, and graphene-based systems, and showcased advancements in experimental techniques such as high-pressure synthesis, atomic-scale imaging, and advanced spectroscopy that have deepened our understanding of superconducting states. Our study also addressed persistent challenges like material instability, scalable synthesis, low critical current densities, and unresolved theoretical questions, while proposing innovative research directions toward achieving room-temperature superconductivity. Ultimately, our findings underscore that despite current obstacles, continuous interdisciplinary efforts and technological innovations are gradually paving the way for more practical, cost-effective HTS applications, which could revolutionize power grids, quantum computing, and a broad range of high-performance systems in the near future.

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