Electrical spin injection and detection in semimetallic films

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The spin injection technique is extended to semimetal bismuth samples in a lateral spin valve geometry. We study spin injection, diffusion, and detection in a material system where a small change in sample stoichiometry results in a large change in the electronic and spin dependent transport properties of the nonmagnetic material. Measurements of magnetoresistance, using a magnetic field applied in the sample plane, as well as the Hanle effect, using a field applied perpendicular to the sample plane, are reported. We demonstrate two remarkable results: i) a spin diffusion length of 230 μ m (*T*=2 K) in a BiPb sample with temperature dependent resistivity, ρ (*T*), which decreases with decreasing *T* is the longest known value in a thin film; ii) the interfacial spin polarization is 10% in BiPb samples with decreasing ρ (*T*) and an order of magnitude smaller 0.8% in Bi samples where ρ (*T*) increases with decreasing *T*.