**LECTURE 4**

**Affixes**

**An affix is a bound morpheme that occurs before or within or after a base. There are three kinds of bound morphemes: prefixes, infixes, and suffixes. Prefixes are those bound morphemes that occur before a base as in ‘enlarge’, ‘import’, ‘prefix’ ‘reconsider’. Prefixes in English are a small class of morphemes, numbering about seventy-five. Their meanings are often those of English preposition and adverbials.**

**Infixes are bound morphemes that have been inserted within a word. In English these are rare. Occasionally they are additions within a word, as in un get at able, where the preposition at of get at is kept as an infix in the –able adjective, though the preposition is usually dropped in similar words, like reliable (from rely on) and accountable (from account for). But infixes in English are most commonly replacements, not additions. They occur in a few noun plurals, like the –ee- in geese, replacing the –oo- of goose, and more often in the past participles of verbs, like the –o- of chose and chosen replacing the**  **–oo- of choose.   Such infixes can be called by the more precise term of “replacive allomorphs.”**

**Suffixes are bound morphemes that occur after a base like performance’ shrinkage, failure, noisy, realize, nails, dreamed, readable. Suffixes may pile up to the number of three or four, whereas prefixes are commonly single, except for the negative un- before another prefix. In normalizers we perhaps reach the limit with four: the base norm plus the four suffixes –al, -ize, -er, -s.**

**There are indeed more suffixes than prefixes in English. An umbrella term for prefixes, infixes, and suffixes (broadly** **speaking, for all morphemes that are not bases) is affix. Only root morphemes can be free, so affixes are necessarily bound.**