Sample assignment 3
Zulu names and nouns

Many given names (first names) in English are taken from common English nouns (e.g. *Jade, Holly, Hope, Hunter*). In Zulu, a Bantu language spoken in South Africa, given names are also formed from common words of the language, but the words are changed somewhat to form the names. Your task in this assignment is to describe how speakers of Zulu create given names from non-name words, based on the data below. The goals of this assignment are thus to get you thinking about morphology and naming, and to allow you to practice looking for patterns in novel data.

The data used in this assignment come from Koopman (1979). All data is transcribed in IPA.

1. Consider the data in (1), which shows how names are derived from nouns in Zulu.
(1)

Noun	Derived name
[uˈmun.tu] 'person'	[uˈmun.tu]
[uˈmu.sa] 'mercy'	[uˈmu.sa]
[iˈsi.pʰo] 'gift'	[uˈsi.pʰo]
[aˈman.dla] 'strength'	[uˈman.dla]
[iˈgu.gu] 'treasure'	[uˈgu.gu]

Based on the data in (1), explain how Zulu speakers turn nouns into names.

2. The examples given in (2) show how names can be derived from **verbs** in Zulu.
(2)

Verb	Derived name
[ˈve.la] 'appear'	[uˈve.la]
[ˈlin.da] 'wait'	[uˈlin.da]
[ˈtʰem.ba] 'hope'	[uˈtʰem.ba]

Based on the data in (2), provide a general description of how verbs are turned into names.

3. Names in Zulu can also be **compound,** i.e., formed from two roots, like compound words in English (e.g. *houseboat, pickpocket, hairdresser*). The examples given in (3) show how compound names can be formed from two roots.
(3)

Root 1	Root 2	Compound name
[ˈbo.ŋa] 'praise'	[inˈko.si] 'lord'	[u.bo.ŋin.ˈko.si] 'praise the Lord'
[ˈbe.ka] 'behold'	[uˈji.se] 'his father'	[u.be.kuˈji.se] 'have regard for his father'
[ˈvu.sa] 'wake up'	[uˈmu.zi] 'homestead'	[u.vu.suˈmu.zi] 'wake up the homestead'
[ˈdi.na] 'offend'	[uˈzu.lu] 'Zulus'	[u.di.nuˈzu.lu] 'offend the Zulus'
[ˈʃĩ.ja] 'leave behind'	[inˈdu.ku] 'stick'	[u.ʃĩ.jinˈdu.ku] 'leave the stick behind'

Based on the data in (3), provide a general description of how compound names are formed in Zulu.

4. Now, consider the examples given in (4) and (5). The examples given in (4) show how **nouns** (not names) can be derived from verbs in Zulu, and the examples given in (5) show how **compound nouns** are formed.

(4)

Verb	Derived noun
[duˈdu.za] 'comfort'	[um.duˈdu.zi] 'comforter'
[laˈmu.la] 'mediate'	[um.laˈmu.li] 'mediator'
[ˈen.za] 'do, make'	[umˈen.zi] 'creator'
[ˈfun.da] 'learn'	[umˈfun.di] 'student'

(5)

Root 1	Root 2	Compound noun
[ˈbe.ka] 'behold'	[inˈko.si] 'lord'	[i.be.kanˈko.si] 'royal guard'
[ˈgo.la] 'catch'	[inˈte.tʰe] 'locust'	[i.go.lanˈte.tʰe] 'species of stork'
[ˈndlu.la] 'surpass'	[iˈmi.tʰi] 'trees'	[i.ndlu.laˈmi.tʰi] 'giraffe'
[ˈdla] 'eat'	[inˈkum.bi] 'locust'	[i.dlanˈkum.bi] 'stork'

Throughout this class, we've explored the possibility that the linguistic processes and characteristics in evidence in a language's **nouns** are also in evidence in that language's **names.** Based on the data you've seen here, would we want to say that this possibility holds in Zulu? Why or why not?

In your answer, you should consider:

- whether the same patterns you identified in the data in (2) are in evidence in the data in (4), and likewise for the data in (3) compared to the data in (5)
- the **meanings** (as indicated by the provided translations) of compound names and compound nouns, as compared to the meanings of their components

and you should illustrate your answer with some examples from the data.

References

Koopman, Adrian. 1979. The linguistic difference between nouns and names in Zulu. *African Studies* 38:67–80.