University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	The mysteries of botanical nomenclature: herbs and their names, PG_00179165		
Field of study	History		
Date of commencement of studies	October 2025	Academic year of realisation of subject	2025/2026
Education level	Bachelor's studies	Subject group	
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery	e-learning
Year of study	1	Language of instruction	Polish Polish
Semester of study	2	ECTS credits	2.0
Learning profile	academic	Assessment form	credit
Conducting unit	Division of Russian Language and Translation Studies -> Institute of Russian and Eastern Studies -> Faculty of Languages -> Rector		
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor	dr Wanda Stec	
	Teachers		

Lesson types

Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30

E-learning hours included: 30.0

Learning activity and number of study hours

Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan	Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM
Number of study hours	30	0.0	20.0	50

Subject objectives

To familiarise students/students with the specifics and principles of linguistic nomination of plants with medicinal purposes. To give a detailed presentation of the issues mentioned in the programme content of the lecture. To make students aware of the importance of the links between man and the natural world - on the example of the nomenclature of herbs.

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
	The Student knows the basic concepts and uses the terminology of linguistic nomination in a precise and correct manner. Has basic knowledge of the specifics and principles of medicinal plant nomenclature and understands the need to use proper names. Understands the relationship between the linguistic nomination of herbs, which is the subject of interest of linguistics, and issues from the area of other humanities, as well as natural, agricultural and medical sciences. Is able, using a variety of sources, to acquire, select and analyse knowledge concerning plant names. Is aware of the importance of the links between humans and the natural world, which are reflected in botanical nomenclature. Being aware of his/her knowledge and skills, understands the need for further education and development of his/her own competences in the scope of the subject of the lecture.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU4] test/exam - oral or written [SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion

Subject contents	Herbs (herbaceous plants, medicinal plants) - characteristics, number of species, classifications. People and medicinal plants - herbalism and herbology through the ages. Concept and modes of linguistic nomination. Types of medicinal plant species names. Latin scientific nomenclature - characteristics, principles. Vernacular nomenclature: nomenclatural names, folk names, other names in national languages. Generic grammatical characteristics and spelling rules of different types of names. Word borrowings and calques in botanical nomenclature. Semantic motivation of medicinal plant species names - variety of naming motifs: features of plant structure; natural habitat; medicinal properties and medical use; biological features; alternative uses of plants; geographical origin; cultural and odantroponymic motivations; names associated with mythology; other motivations. The lecture is delivered using a multimedia presentation, including illustrations of herbs whose names are analysed and compared. It primarily covers issues in linguistics, but the lecturer draws on botany, horticulture (herbalism), herbal medicine, ethnography, pharmaceutical history and others to explain the semantic motivation of the names. Examples of medicinal plant species names are given with explanations in 3 languages: Latin (systematic names), Polish and - for comparison - Russian (selected names only).
Prerequisites and co-requisites	Selection of the subject. Knowledge of the Polish language at a level sufficient to understand the subject matter of the lecture.

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
Written credit assignment (closed question test)	51.0%	80.0%
Active class participation (attendance at lecture and participation in discussion)	70.0%	20.0%

Recommended reading

Basic literature

1. Stec W., *Names of medicinal plants: onomasiological models of linguistic nomination in binomial names of plant species in Polish and Russian, compared with Latin scientific nomenclature*, Gdańsk 2025.
2. Waniakowa J., *Polish dialect names of wild-growing herbaceous plants against a Slavic background*, Kraków 2012.
3. Rejewski M., *Names of plants*, Toruń 2016.
4. Wierzbicka A., *Names of plants as a mirror of the rural world (on the material of the Kujawy dialect)*, Łódź 2023.
5. Rogowska-Cybulska E., *The dialect image of plants in the light of the nominative activity of their names (on the example of the dialect of the village of Wagi in the Łomża district)*, Gdańsk 2005.

Supplementary literature

1. Kuźnicka B. (ed.), *Historia leków naturalnych, vol. 4: From the history and etymology of Polish names of medicinal plants*, Warszawa 1993.
2. Pastusiak K., *The Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland in the light of linguistic and ethnographic data on the basis of plant names*, Warszawa 2007.
3. Kreiner J., *Etymological dictionary of Latin names and terms used in biology and medicine*, Wrocław; Kraków 1960.
4. Kujawska M., Łuczaj Ł., Sosnowska J., Klepacki P., *Plants in folk beliefs and customs. Adam Fischer's dictionary*, Wrocław 2016.
5. Strzelecka H., Kowalski J. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of herbalism and herbal medicine*, Warszawa 2000.

eResources addresses

Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	Which of the following is the scientific name of the plant species? 1) trąby anielskie 2) *Datura stramonium* L. 3) bieluń dzięd zierzawa
Work placement	Not applicable

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