Abstract:
Airports are organized as ‘text types’ or genres in terms of four defining moments or stages: approach, departures, airside and arrivals. In each of these stages, we witness how ‘centre’ and ‘periphery’ are both static and dynamic, permanent and transient, and how they are also dialectically constituted through the deployment of various discourses, genres and styles, including multiple languages alongside images, interactions, bodies and artefacts. This paper examines how two regional airports (Seattle-Tacoma and Cardiff) use mono- and multi-lingual displays in staging their focal and peripheral spaces and how they ‘put themselves on the map’ by positioning themselves – and their passengers – as being simultaneously connected to the global (i.e. gateways to the world) and to the local (i.e. thresholds to ‘home’). As agents of difference and markers of distinction, airports are purveyors of both national/regional pride and global capital.

About the speaker:
Professor Adam Jaworski is Professor of Language and Communication at the School of English, University of Hong Kong. He has published on such topics as language and globalization, display of languages in space, media discourse, nonverbal communication, and text-based art. His most recent publications include The Discourse Reader, 3rd edition (Routledge, 2014), a special issue of the Journal of Sociolinguistics on Sociolinguistics and Tourism (2014, with Crispin Thurlow and Monica Heller), and a special issue of Social Semiotics on Typographic Landscaping (2015, with Johan Järlehed). With Nik Coupland he co-edits the Oxford University Press book series, Oxford Studies in Sociolinguistics.

Sandwiches and coffee served. All are welcome!
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