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Decoding Hegemony in Digital Marketing Jobs: A Semantic Network Analysis of Jobstreet Indonesia

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Abstract

The rapid growth of Indonesia's digital workforce has been accompanied by increasingly symbolic dynamics in the labor market, especially in how language shapes perceptions of job value. This study analyzes how employers use language in job advertisements to construct symbolic hierarchies and maintain dominance, particularly in the digital marketing sector. Using a descriptive quantitative approach and semantic network analysis, 987 job listings containing the keyword "digital marketing" were collected from Jobstreet over a one-month period and analyzed through bipartite (job title–requirement) and monopartite (job title–job title) networks. The results show that English-dominant job vacancies are closely associated with senior-labeled positions and higher salary offers, while Indonesian appears more frequently in operational roles with lower pay. However, symbolic elevation through titles such as "Manager" or "Specialist" often fails to correspond with actual compensation, and positions requiring many skills are frequently framed with low-status labels such as "Intern" or "Remote," indicating the use of language to normalize job status while obscuring workload imbalances. Salary information is also often undisclosed, limiting bargaining power and weakening transparency. Additional descriptive findings indicate a geographical concentration of high-value jobs in Jakarta, where English proficiency is more frequently required and median wages are notably higher. Overall, this study demonstrates how recruitment language operates as a form of linguistic hegemony—normalizing inequality by framing structurally similar jobs as symbolically distinct—and highlights the need for stronger regulation and public awareness regarding fair compensation and transparent hiring practices in Indonesia's digital labor market.

Keywords: hegemony, digital marketing jobs, semantic network analysis

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1. Introduction

Indonesia is experiencing significant growth in its digital workforce, with an annual increase of approximately 600,000 individuals and a projected total of nine million by 2030 (Gayatri et al., 2023, p. 10). However, rather than serving as an economic asset, this surplus presents new

challenges for the government, particularly in workforce absorption and quality improvement. According to Indonesia's Central Statistics Agency (BPS), unemployment reached 7,28 million people as of February 2025 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025, p. 3). The International Monetary Fund (2024, p. 36) further ranks Indonesia as the country with the highest unemployment rate among developing countries in Asia. At the regional level, ASEAN is undergoing rapid digital transformation driven by Industry 4.0 technologies such as AI, big data, and IoT—changing not only how people work, but also how societies function (Suryadi & Nasution, 2024). While this transformation opens new economic opportunities, it also raises the urgent need to realign the workforce with the evolving demands of the digital economy.

A primary factor contributing to this issue is skill mismatch—the gap between job seekers' qualifications and market demands. According to the International Labour Organization (2023, p. 13), 51% of Indonesian workers are employed in fields unrelated to their formal education, with 35.2% being underqualified. A survey by Populix reinforces this, reporting that job applications are often rejected due to mismatches in work experience (41%), technical skills (33%), and education level (32%) (Populix & KitaLulus, 2024, p. 54).

While many policy efforts focus on improving worker competencies, addressing skill mismatch also requires critically examining how employers define, frame, and communicate job expectations. As Hisa et al. (2025) and Timming et al. (2025, p. 2) emphasize, understanding the employer's perspective is key to resolving skill mismatch. Tran et al. (2024) further argue that analyzing employer expectations helps uncover emerging market demands and closes the gap between academic competencies and real-world requirements.

However, this framing process is not neutral. Job advertisements do not merely reflect employment needs—they also construct symbolic hierarchies through the language they use. In this context, language becomes a tool of power. Malik et al. (2025) show how linguistic structures in employment documents often normalize asymmetrical labor relations by positioning workers in subordinate roles. For instance, a role titled "Social Media Admin" may offer lower compensation than "Social Media Specialist" despite requiring similar qualifications. Łącka-Badura (2017) similarly observes how imperative verbs in job ads reflect one-sided obligations imposed on job seekers. Viewed through Gramsci's theory of hegemony, these linguistic strategies sustain employer dominance while appearing neutral or technical.

Moreover, this employer hegemony is closely tied to linguistic imperialism—the structured dominance of one language over others within economic, educational, and communicative systems (Phillipson, 2018). In Indonesia's job market, English is often used not simply for clarity but to signal prestige, global orientation, and exclusivity. Zeng, Ponce, & Li (2023) explain that this glorification of English reproduces social hierarchies, granting privilege to speakers of the dominant language while marginalizing others. Such language-based discrimination reinforces inequality under the guise of professional standards.

This study addresses a gap in the literature by integrating both technical and ideological layers in analyzing job advertisements: (1) the technical layer, by mapping the language used to describe skill requirements in digital marketing jobs; and (2) the socio-ideological layer, by examining how language is used to maintain employer dominance. By focusing on digital marketing—a fast-growing sector and a common career path for communication studies graduates—this research provides insights not only into required competencies but also into the symbolic mechanisms that normalize inequality.

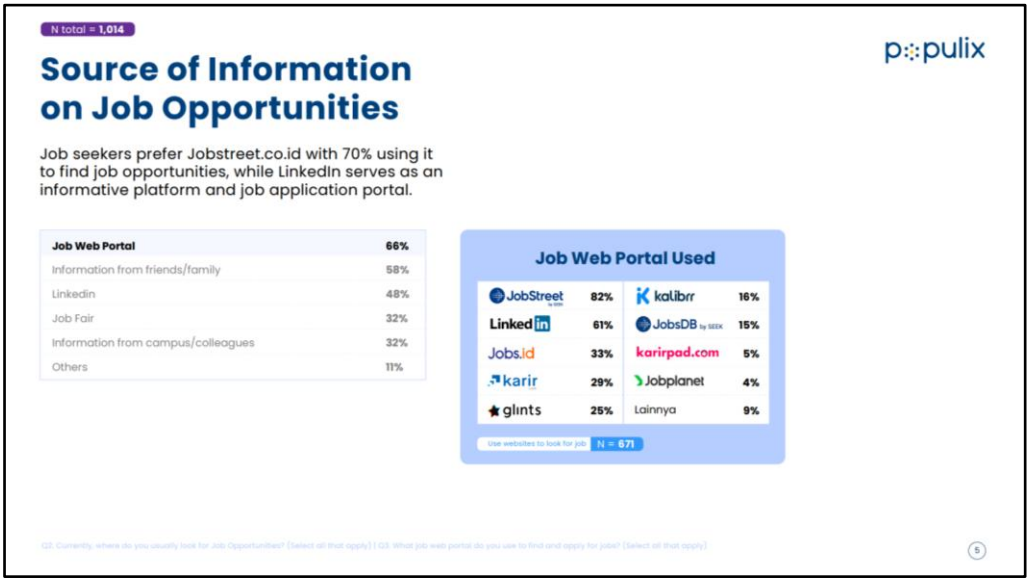

Figure 1. Survey on The Most Used Job Portals in Indonesia
Source: Populix, 2023

These recruitment narratives largely circulate through online job platforms, which have become the main infrastructure connecting employers and job seekers in the country's digital and creative labor market. Among several major platforms—such as LinkedIn, Glints, and Kalibrr—Jobstreet remains the most widely used, accessed by 82% of Indonesian job seekers (Populix, 2023) and broadly relied upon for hiring administrative, marketing, and junior–mid level professional roles. Its standardized vacancy format, which includes job titles, salary range, and competency requirements, enables systematic analysis of linguistic patterns and labor valuation. Therefore, Jobstreet was selected as the data source to ensure representativeness and comparability while focusing on the platform most influential in shaping digital labor market dynamics in Indonesia.

In this context, digital marketing refers to the process of achieving marketing objectives through the use of digital technologies, data, and media platforms (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022, p. 5). It involves managing a company's online presence—such as search engines, social media, digital advertising, email campaigns, etc—integrated with marketing communication strategies. Digital marketing also demands a broad set of skills, including market research, strategic planning, data analysis, and campaign evaluation. As such, it requires both

hard/technical and soft skills, making it essential to examine how these skill requirements are communicated and framed by employers in job advertisements.

The concept of hegemony offers a critical framework for understanding how power is reproduced not only through coercive means but also through symbolic and cultural consensus. As Anderson (1976, p. 22) notes, hegemony operates by manipulating collective belief systems to establish certain worldviews as "normal." Antonio Gramsci, who originated the theory of hegemony, conceptualized society as consisting of two superstructures: civil society and political society (Bates, 1975, p. 353). Civil society includes institutions such as the media, education, and religion that shape social consciousness by disseminating dominant ideologies, while political society refers to state institutions that maintain control through law and coercion (Bates, 1975, pp. 357–360).

In contemporary contexts, language plays a central role in this hegemonic process. Skerritt (2019) emphasizes that language functions not merely as a medium of communication but as a vehicle for reproducing ideology and culture, a process further amplified by digital technologies such as the internet and social media (p. 156). One of the most evident forms of linguistic hegemony is linguistic imperialism, defined as the dominance of one language over others across domains such as education, the economy, media, and communication (Phillipson, 2018). In this regard, English is often positioned as the dominant language—both structurally, through privileged access to infrastructure and resources, and culturally, through the symbolic glorification of English and the marginalization of local languages (Phillipson, 2018; Zeng, Ponce, & Li, 2023).

Zeng, Ponce, and Li (2023) argue that the perceived superiority of English is deeply rooted in the ideology of educated elites in postcolonial countries or regions. This creates a linguistic hierarchy in which speakers of dominant languages benefit from symbolic and material advantages, while others are excluded. This phenomenon, known as linguicism, refers to the systemic favoring of one language over others in ways that reflect broader social and economic inequalities. In the labor market, proficiency in English thus becomes more than a communication skill—it acts as a form of symbolic capital that grants access to more prestigious, higher-paying positions.

2. Research method

This study adopts a pragmatist approach, a paradigm that emphasizes practical solutions through the integration of various methods and perspectives. This allows the researcher to choose the most suitable research design to answer the research question without being bound by a particular methodological or theoretical stance (Creswell, 2024, p. 14; Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 6). The research design is descriptive quantitative, employing semantic network analysis as the core method.

The data collection began with a data scraping process of all job listings containing the specific keyword "digital marketing" posted on Jobstreet between May 1st and May 30th, 2025,

using Google Colab. This time frame was selected to comply with Jobstreet's system limitations, which only displays job postings from the past 30 days. The extracted data included job title, company name, posting date, salary range, location, job link, and job description.

Job Title	Company Name	Posting Date	Salary Range		Location	Link	Job Description
			min.	max.			
Content Creator	PT Keluarga Ningrat Indo	18 April 2025	Rp4.000.000	Rp5.000.000	Sidoarjo	...	...
Marketing Communication Supervisor	PT Bliss Properti Indonesia, Tbk	19 April 2025	Rp6.000.000	Rp.7.500.000	Surabaya	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Figure 2. Example of Scraping Result Data Table
Source: Processed

After collection, the dataset underwent preprocessing to clean the description column by removing stopwords, numbers, punctuation, and non-informative words—except those related to skills and qualifications. Job advertisements that did not mention "digital marketing" in the description were also removed. This process produced a list of word pairs referring to skills and requirements. These word pairs, along with job titles, were then used to build the semantic network: both components became nodes, and their co-occurrence in a single job posting formed the edges. Two spreadsheets were compiled: the Node Table (containing job titles and their salary attributes) and the Edge List (detailing the connections between job titles and skill/requirement word pairs). To clearly distinguish job title nodes from skill nodes, the term "Job" was appended to each job title label.

The preprocessed data were analyzed using semantic network analysis (SemNA), utilizing Gephi software, constructing two types of projection networks: a bipartite/two-mode network and a monopartite/one-mode network. The analytical levels used were adapted from social network analysis frameworks by Eriyanto (2021) and Suratnoaji & Arianto (2021). In addition, simple statistical techniques were employed to examine salary distribution across job titles. The network metrics and their application are as follows:

2.1. Bipartite Network

Cluster Level – The modularity metric here was used to detect polarization and identify the number of groups formed. This level also included salary distribution analysis (median and mode), categorization of language used, classification of skill types (hard skills, soft skills, and non-skill requirements), and classification of job title levels. The purpose of this cluster-level analysis is to address the technical layer of the study, by mapping the language used to describe skill requirements in digital marketing job advertisements. Through this mapping, the study

identifies how different language patterns reflect skill demands and how these patterns relate to job classification and compensation.

2.2. Monopartite Network

Cluster Level – The modularity was again used to detect polarization, while clustering coefficient metric was applied to measure the score of interconnectedness among job titles within each cluster, indicating the score of similarity in required skills. This analysis was also supplemented with salary-related statistics, including median, minimum, maximum, relative gap, and standard deviation. The purpose of this cluster-level analysis is to address the socio-ideological layer of the study, by examining how job titles that appear similar in structure and skill requirements may still be assigned vastly different economic values—revealing how language is used to maintain employer dominance through symbolic differentiation.

Actor Level – Degree centrality was used to measure the number of required skills associated with each job title. These values were then compared to the minimum salary offered to assess whether positions that demanded more qualifications were compensated accordingly. This comparison further highlights the symbolic manipulation of job titles, where language may be used to frame certain roles as more or less prestigious regardless of their actual responsibilities or required competencies.

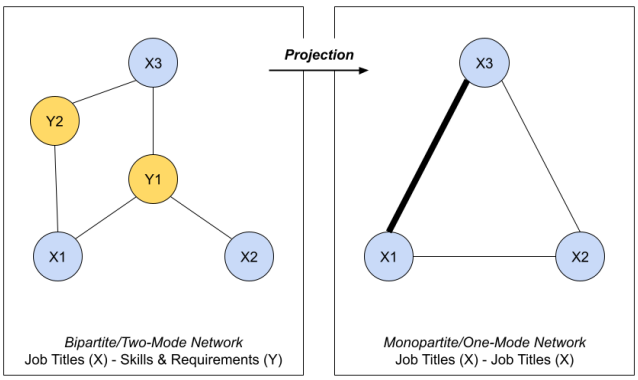

Figure 3. Bipartite and Monopartite Network Projection
Source: Processed

To examine whether semantic and wage structures reflect spatial disparities in Indonesia's digital labor market, an additional descriptive comparison was introduced based on employer location. Job postings were categorized into two groups: Jakarta and non-Jakarta, reflecting Indonesia's primary metropolitan center versus peripheral labor markets. This location-based analysis evaluated the distribution of vacancies, salary transparency, median wages (for postings displaying salary information), and the dominant language used in job descriptions. These descriptive statistics serve as a contextual control, enabling a more cautious interpretation of linguistic dominance and compensation inequality within the broader socio-economic geography of Indonesia.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Mapping the Language of Skill Requirements in Bipartite Network

The collected data were transformed into elements of a bipartite (two-mode) network consisting of 1.681 nodes—987 job title nodes and 694 skill/requirement nodes. This network contained 20.423 edges connecting job titles to the corresponding skills or qualifications listed in the job ads. Visualization and analysis were conducted using Gephi software. To focus on the core structure of the network, a "Giant Component" filter was applied, resulting in 1.599 nodes (95,12%) and all 20.423 edges (100%) being retained for analysis.

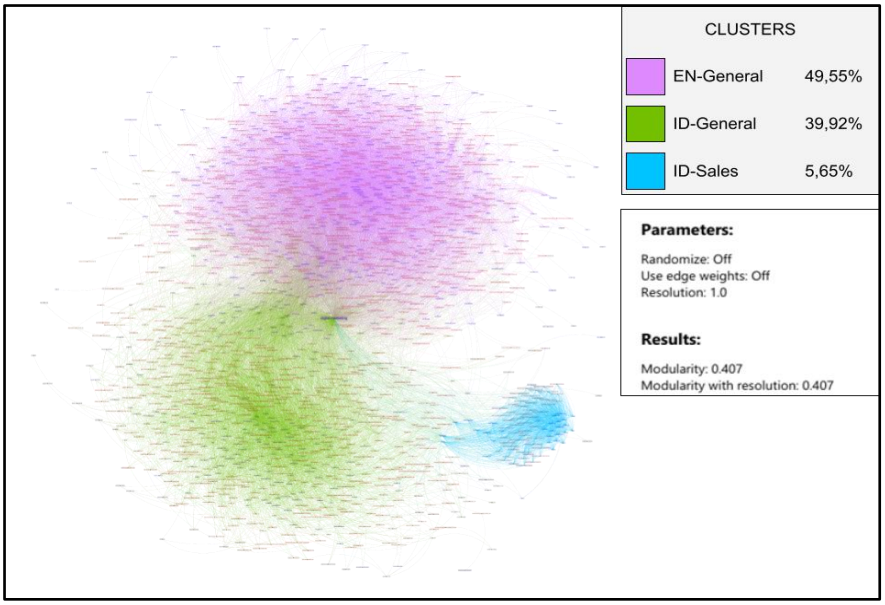

Figure 4. Bipartite Network of Job Titles and Skill Requirements
Source: Processed

At the cluster level, modularity analysis produced a score of 0,407, indicating a relatively low degree of polarization. Three major clusters were identified: ID-Sales, ID-General, and EN-General. These cluster names were derived from the dominant language used in the listed skills/requirements and the type of job titles associated with them. The ID-Sales cluster comprises skills written in Indonesian and is dominated by job titles related to Wi-Fi and internet sales. The ID-General cluster also uses Indonesian but includes a more diverse set of job titles. The EN-General cluster contains skills described primarily in English and features a similarly diverse set of job titles.

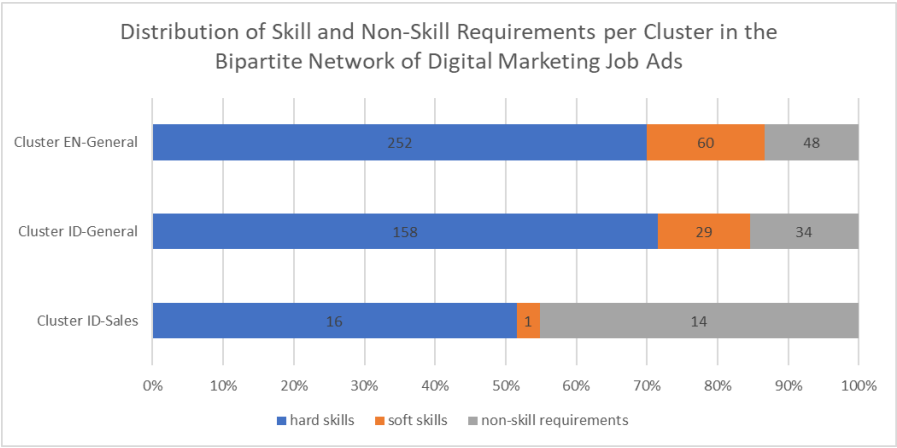

Figure 5. Distribution of Skill and Non-Skill Requirements per Cluster in the Bipartite Network
Source: Processed

Table 1. Language Categories in Skill/Requirement Terms per Cluster

Language	Cluster ID-Sales	Cluster ID General	Cluster EN-General
Indonesian	30	152	1
English	0	52	350
Others (name, etc)	1	17	9
TOTAL	**31**	**221**	**360**

Source: Processed

Across all three clusters, hard skills were the most frequently cited. The ID-Sales cluster consists of 95 nodes, comprising 64 job titles and 31 skills, where 52% (n = 16) of the skills are hard skills, 3% (n = 1) are soft skills, and 45% (n = 14) are categorized as non-skill requirements. This cluster has the highest proportion of non-skill requirements, indicating that the associated job titles are not strongly based on professional competencies and may be interpreted as low-prestige or low-quality roles. This is further reinforced by the dominance of skills such as "sebar brosur" (flyer distribution) and "menjaga stand" (stand supervision), which reflect a fundamental misunderstanding of what digital marketing actually entailed by Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2022).

The ID-General cluster comprises 671 nodes (450 job titles and 221 skills). Among the 221 skills, 72% (n = 152) are hard skills, 13% (n = 29) soft skills, and 15% (n = 34) non-skill requirements. In terms of language use, 68.7% (n = 152) are written in Indonesian, 23.5% (n = 52) in English, and the remaining 7.6% (n = 17) consist of platform/tool names or technical terms.

The EN-General cluster includes 833 nodes (473 job titles and 360 skills). Among the skills, 70% (n = 252) are hard skills, 17% (n = 60) soft skills, and 13% (n = 48) non-skill requirements. English overwhelmingly dominates the language used (97.2%, n = 350), while Indonesian appears in only one instance (0.27%), and 2.5% (n = 9) consist of neutral technical terms.

Table 2. Hierarchical Levels of Job Titles per Cluster

Level	Cluster ID-Sales	Cluster ID General	Cluster EN-General
Senior	2	185	279
Entry	20	114	99
Technical	42	151	95
TOTAL	**64**	**450**	**473**

Source: Processed

Job titles were classified into three hierarchical levels based on the terms used in their names, following the definitions provided by the Indeed Editorial Team (2025):

a. Senior level – includes titles containing terms such as specialist, manager, supervisor, head, leader, senior, consultant, strategist, expert, analyst, coordinator, or director.
b. Entry level – includes titles such as *staff*, *executive*, *admin*, *officer*, *intern*, *junior*, *freelance*, *support*, or *assistant*.
c. Technical level – refers to titles that are directly named after their job functions, such as *advertiser* or *sales*, without specifying a rank.

Based on proportional distribution, the EN-General cluster had the highest percentage of senior-level roles (58.9%), followed by ID-General (41.1%) and ID-Sales (3%). For entry-level roles, ID-Sales led proportionally (31.2%), followed by ID-General (25.3%) and EN-General (20.9%). However, in absolute terms, ID-General contained the highest number of entry-level roles (n = 114). Regarding technical-level roles, ID-Sales recorded the highest percentage (65.6%), though ID-General still had the highest absolute count (n = 151).

This distribution aligns with Skerritt's (2019) notion of linguistic hegemony, in which language functions as a tool to reproduce ideological and social structures. In this case, employers use English to construct symbolic distinctions—framing senior-level roles as more professional or elite—while Indonesian is employed for entry-level and operational roles, thus simplifying their perceived value.

Table 3. Salary Statistic Comparison per Cluster

Statistic	Cluster ID-Sales	Cluster ID General	Cluster EN-General
Median	-	Rp5.000.000	Rp5.600.000
Mode	-	Rp5.000.000	Rp8.000.000

Source: Processed

To further explore linguistic hegemony, salary comparisons were made across the three clusters using median and mode values. The ID-Sales cluster had no recorded salary data. The ID-General cluster showed a median and mode of Rp5.000.000, while the EN-General cluster had a higher median (Rp5.600.000) and a mode of Rp8.000.000.

These findings reinforce the concept of linguistic imperialism as discussed by Phillipson (2018) and Zeng, Ponce, and Li (2023), where English-language job descriptions are more glorified and associated with higher compensation. While Indonesian-language roles tended to remain at Rp5.000.000, English-dominant roles more frequently reached Rp8.000.000, suggesting that the choice of language not only shapes perceptions of prestige but also influences economic value.

While the bipartite network provides a technical overview of how skill requirements are linguistically constructed and distributed across job titles, it does not fully capture how these job titles themselves are positioned and valued within the labor market. To address this, a monopartite network analysis was conducted to examine the semantic relationships among job titles based on shared skill requirements. This approach allows a deeper examination of symbolic domination, particularly in how job titles are named and how compensation is determined, often in ways that do not align with the actual demands of the roles.

3.2. Revealing Employer Hegemony through the Monopartite Network

The analysis of monopartite network highlights deeper dynamics of employer hegemony, particularly in how job titles are constructed and valued. One of key findings is the lack of salary transparency across job listings, including for entry-level roles—where 60% of positions do not disclose salary information. This reflects a structural pattern in which employers withhold key compensation data, subtly shaping job seekers' expectations. Over time, this absence of information is normalized, leading job seekers to apply without knowing the value of their labor. As a result, employers are granted the discretion to assign compensation arbitrarily—often without reference to objective standards and potentially below fair market value. This practice reduces workers' bargaining power and reinforces unequal power relations in the job market.

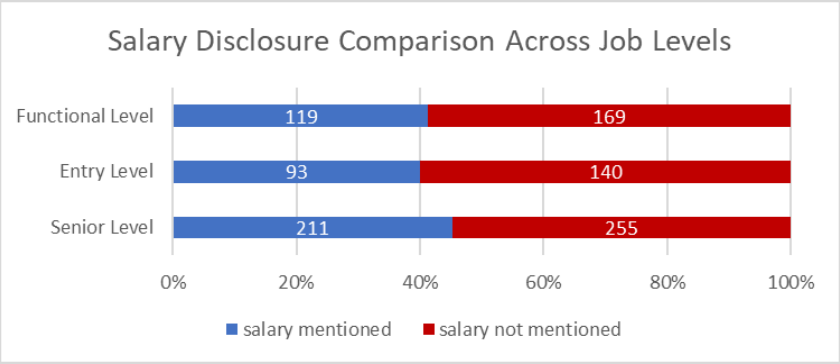

Figure 6. Salary Disclosure Comparison Across Job Levels
Source: Processed

3.2.1. Cluster Level

The monopartite network was filtered using two criteria: it included only job titles that disclosed salary information, and only retained connections (edges) with a minimum weight of 5,0. In other words, two job titles are considered connected if they share at least five skill or requirement terms. This filtering process ensured a more meaningful representation of semantic

similarity, focusing the analysis on stronger, more substantial overlaps in skill language. As a result, the filtered network consisted of 362 job title nodes and 9.329 new edges.

The modularity analysis revealed four clusters within this network, each composed of job titles that are semantically interconnected based on shared skill requirements. However, the internal composition of these clusters is highly diverse. Each cluster contains a variety of job titles with different names and seniority levels, indicating that employers do not consistently adhere to standardized job classifications. Instead, job titles appear to be shaped by each company's internal logic and linguistic preferences. This inconsistency reflects a symbolic construction of job identity—one that is not necessarily aligned with actual job functions, but rather with how companies choose to frame and communicate those roles.

Despite this diversity, job titles in each cluster are closely connected through shared skill requirements, as shown by high clustering coefficients. Yet, salary disparities within each cluster remain stark. Cluster 1 and Cluster 2, for example, demonstrate extremely wide gaps between minimum and maximum salaries, with relative gaps of 4.900% and 5.400%, respectively, and high standard deviations (Rp3,7 million and Rp6,1 million). Cluster 3, though smaller, shows a relative gap of 1.567% with a standard deviation of Rp5,3 million, while Cluster 4 shows a 500% gap and a standard deviation of Rp3,5 million. Interestingly, median salaries across all clusters fall within a similar range (around Rp5 to 6 million), giving the false impression of uniform compensation. However, the high standard deviations and wide salary gaps reveal significant inequality within semantically related job groups.

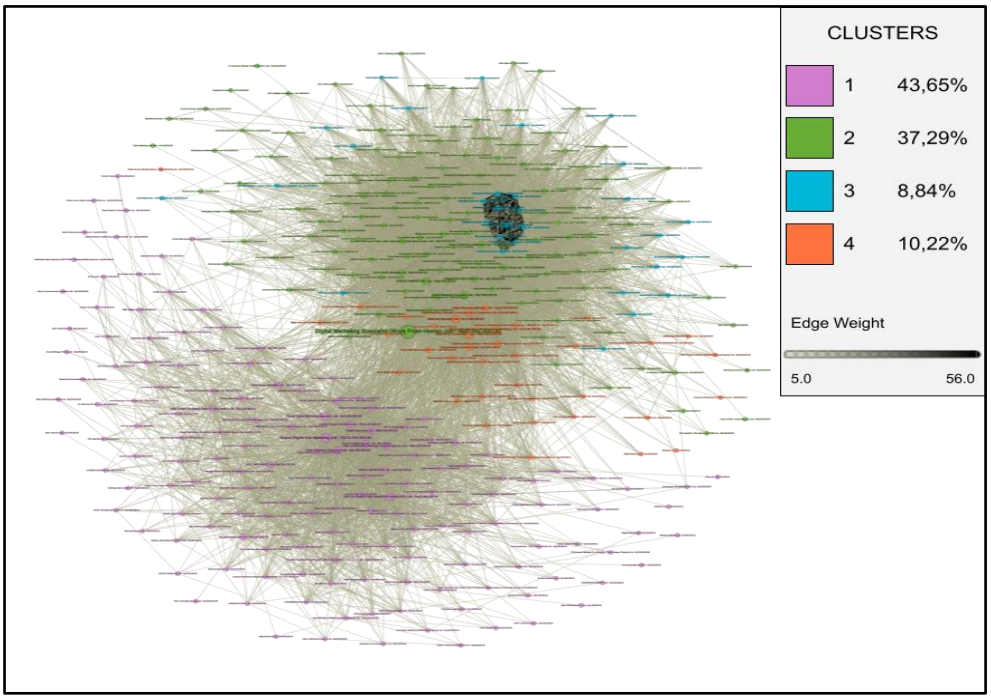

Figure 7. Monopartite Network of Job Titles (Based on Shared Skills)
Source: Processed

Table 4. Salary Disclosure Comparison Across Job Levels

	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
Nodes (n)	158	135	32	37
Median (Rp)	5.000.000,00	6.000.000,00	5.000.000,00	6.000.000,00
Min. (Rp)	500.000,00	1.000.000,00	1.500.000,00	3.000.000,00
Max. (Rp)	25.000.000,00	55.000.000,00	25.000.000,00	18.000.000,00
Relative Gap	4.900%	5.400%	1.567%	500%
Std. Deviation (Rp)	3.778.775,96	6.142.035,24	5.363.764,00	Rp3,576,599.27
Avg. Clustering Coefficient	0,57	0,66	0,82	0,63

Source: Processed

This contradiction illustrates that semantically similar job titles, often requiring comparable skills, may be valued very differently in economic terms. In other words, semantic proximity does not guarantee compensation equity. From a hegemonic perspective, as Anderson (1976) argues, dominance operates by shaping what is perceived as normal. In this context, employers utilize differences in job title terminology to construct symbolic distinctions. These distinctions disguise functional similarities between roles and legitimize pay differences that are otherwise unjustified by skill or responsibility.

This aligns with Skerritt's (2019) idea that language is not only a medium of communication but also a powerful tool for maintaining social hierarchies. Through job advertisements—via word choices, job labels, and title framing—employers shape how people view different types of work. This makes it seem normal that some jobs are paid much less than others, even if the work is very similar. However, the large salary gaps found between jobs that are closely connected in the network show that these differences are not based on real job function. Instead, they are created through language. In other words, employers use language to make jobs look different—even when they are not—so they can control how much each job is valued.

3.2.2. Actor Level

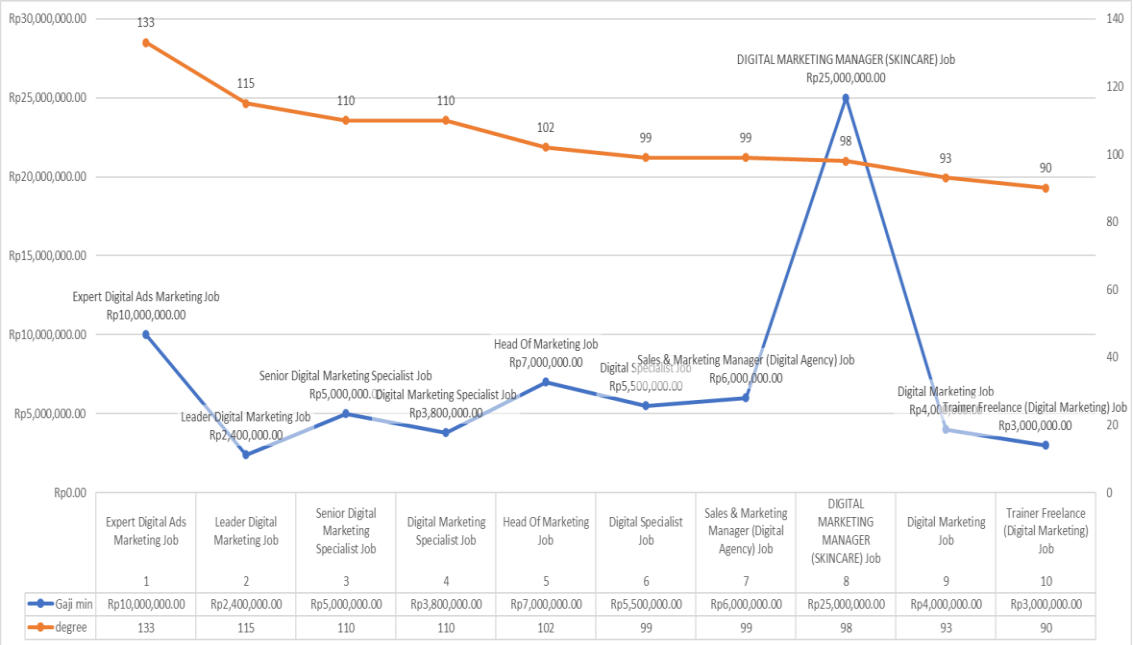

Figure 8. Degree Centrality and Salaries Comparison in Cluster 1
Source: Processed

The degree centrality analysis of Cluster 1 shows that most top-ranking positions are labeled as senior-level roles. However, these positions reveal a mismatch between the number of required skills (degree) and the minimum salary offered. For instance, the "Digital Marketing Manager (Skincare) Job" lists a minimum salary of Rp25.000.000 with a degree of 98, while the "Sales & Marketing Manager (Digital Agency) Job" has a nearly identical degree (99) but offers only Rp6.000.000. Similarly, the "Expert Digital Ads Marketing Job," with the highest degree in this cluster (133), offers Rp10.000.000, and the "Leader Digital Marketing Job" ranks second in degree (115) yet offers the lowest minimum salary at just Rp2.400.000. The tenth-ranked position, "Trainer Freelance (Digital Marketing) Job," has a degree of 90 but only offers Rp3.000.000.

These inconsistencies suggest that employers do not base compensation on workload, skill demands, or job title hierarchy. Positions labeled "Manager" or "Leader" are often underpaid relative to the expectations their titles imply. This indicates that job titles are used symbolically to create an illusion of prestige, despite the lack of economic value attached. In this case, employers exercise symbolic control through language—constructing perceived job value not through responsibilities or required skills, but through titles that appear professional. This reflects a form of linguistic hegemony, where inequality is obscured and normalized through strategic naming.

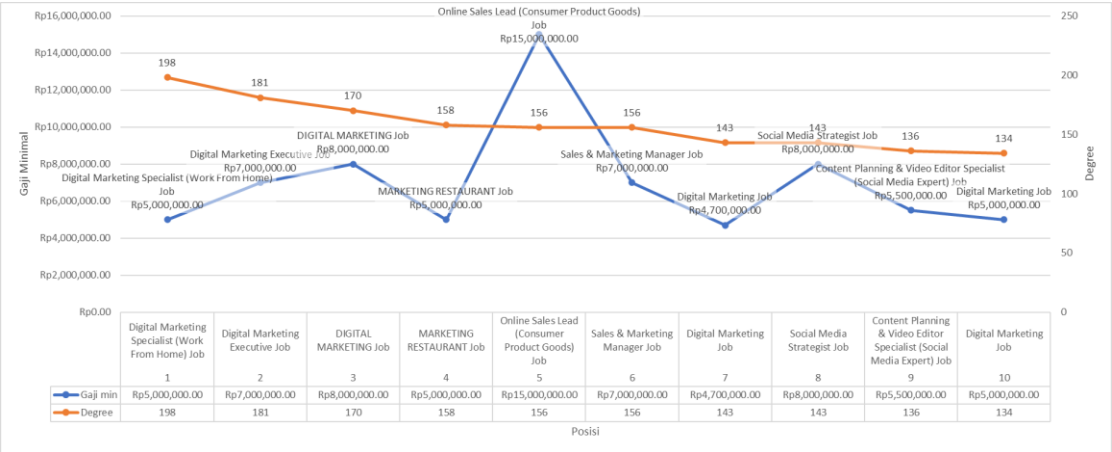

Figure 9. Degree Centrality and Salaries Comparison in Cluster 2
Source: Processed

The top ten job titles in Cluster 2 vary widely in naming and seniority, showing that high skill connectivity (degree) is not exclusive to specific job levels. However, a clear inconsistency appears between the degree values and the minimum salaries offered. For example, both the "Online Sales Lead (Consumer Product Goods) Job" and "Sales & Marketing Manager Job" have an identical degree of 156, yet their minimum salaries differ significantly—Rp15.000.000 and Rp7.000.000 respectively. This suggests that titles like "Manager" are used more to convey prestige than to reflect actual compensation or job value.

The highest-degree position in this cluster, "Digital Marketing Specialist (Work From Home) Job" (198), shares the same minimum salary (Rp5.000.000) with "Digital Marketing Job," which has a much lower degree (134). This highlights that the volume of required skills does not necessarily translate into higher pay. In particular, the "Work From Home" label appears to serve as a symbolic frame—projecting flexibility while allowing employers to justify lower salaries, even for highly demanding roles. These findings point to a broader pattern in which job value is not constructed through workload or qualifications, but through narrative labels and strategic naming—reflecting a form of employer hegemony through language.

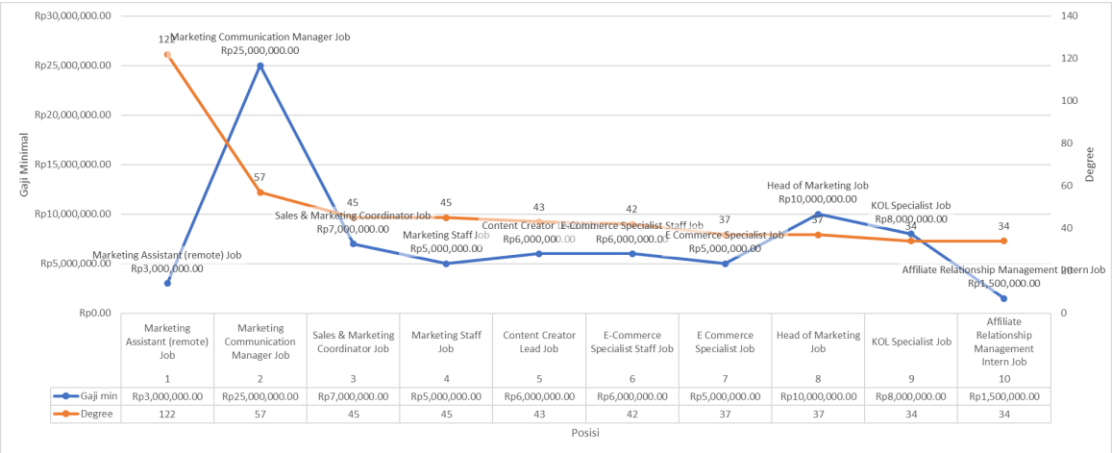

Figure 10. Degree Centrality and Salaries Comparison in Cluster 3
Source: Processed

Findings from Cluster 3 reinforce the absence of a consistent relationship between the number of required skills (degree) and the minimum salary offered. For example, the "Marketing Assistant (Remote) Job" has the highest degree in this cluster (122), yet it only offers Rp3.000.000—just twice the salary of the "Affiliate Relationship Management Intern Job," which has a much lower degree (34). In some cases, two positions with the same degree show a large salary gap, such as between the "Affiliate Relationship Management Intern Job" and "KOL Specialist Job," both with degree 34 but offering Rp1.500.000 and Rp8.000.000 respectively.

These disparities highlight how employers use job labels—such as "intern"—to frame certain roles as low-level and justify minimal compensation, even when the skill demands are comparable to those of more professional roles. Job titles thus become symbolic tools used to mask inequality and influence how value is perceived. In this context, linguistic hegemony operates through neutral-sounding labels that, in reality, sustain unequal structures in the labor market.

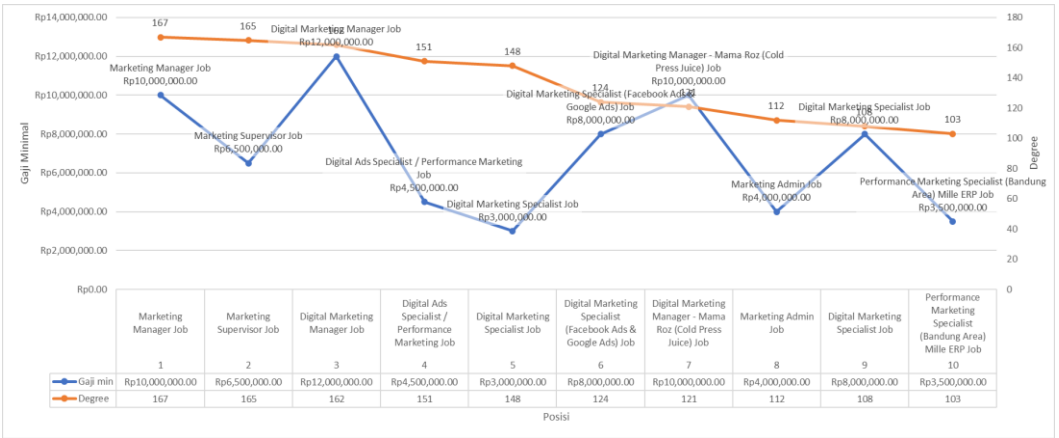

Figure 11. Degree Centrality and Salaries Comparison in Cluster 4
Source: Processed

The results from Cluster 4 once again reveal a clear mismatch between the number of required skills (degree) and the minimum salary offered. Most top-ranked job titles in this cluster carry senior-level labels, yet there is no consistent pattern linking job titles, skill demands, and economic value. For instance, "Marketing Manager Job" holds the highest degree in this cluster (167) but offers a relatively modest salary of Rp10.000.000. Meanwhile, a similar position, "Digital Marketing Manager Job," offers a higher salary (Rp12.000.000) despite a slightly lower degree (162). On the other hand, "Performance Marketing Specialist (Bandung Area) Mille ERP Job" has the lowest degree among the top 10 (103), and the lowest salary as well—Rp3.500.000.

A similar inconsistency appears in two listings for "Digital Marketing Specialist Job," which differ significantly in salary: one offers Rp3.000.000 (degree 148) while the other offers Rp8.000.000 (degree 108). These cases show that job titles like "Manager" or "Specialist" are used to convey prestige but are not tied to consistent compensation. Even among senior-level roles, wide pay gaps persist, further demonstrating that employers do not rely on clear standards when assigning value to job positions.

This inequality becomes even more evident when a senior-level role (ranked 5th or 10th) offers less than an entry-level role like "Marketing Admin Job" (ranked 8th), which has a degree of 112 and a salary of Rp8.000.000. This suggests that labels such as "Specialist"—which should imply expertise—can be associated with salaries equal to or lower than administrative entry-level roles. Ultimately, this reflects how employers construct job value not through job responsibilities or required skills, but through flexible naming conventions. In this context, job titles serve as symbolic tools that mask inequality, making compensation disparities appear justified—even when they are not.

Overall, the actor-level analysis of the monopartite network reveals significant disparities in how jobs are valued, as reflected in the mismatch between the number of required skills and the salaries offered. These inequalities are reinforced through the strategic use of language and job titles, which shape perceptions that certain positions are prestigious or high-value—even when their compensation does not reflect such status.

Findings from the degree centrality metric indicate that a higher number of skill requirements does not necessarily lead to higher pay. Employers often assign senior-level labels such as "Manager" or "Specialist" to roles that, in reality, offer lower compensation than some entry-level roles. These titles are used symbolically to construct a sense of prestige, covering the economic undervaluation of those roles.

Moreover, employers use additional labels like "Work From Home," "Remote," or "Intern" to frame positions as flexible or entry-level. This framing allows them to justify lower salaries, even when these roles demand multiple skills and carry strategic responsibilities comparable to senior-level roles. These practices reveal how job value is constructed not purely based on workload or qualifications, but through linguistic choices embedded in the recruitment process.

In this context, language becomes a tool of hegemony—as argued by Skerritt (2019)—by reinforcing the idea that inequality is normal or acceptable (Anderson, 1976, p. 22). By using professional or neutral-sounding labels, employers symbolically differentiate jobs that are substantially similar in skill demands but divergent in compensation. This is where symbolic domination takes place: through seemingly ordinary labels, employers obscure deeper structural imbalances in the labor market.

Furthermore, this symbolic domination does not operate in isolation but is embedded within Indonesia's spatial economic hierarchy. To assess whether language and wage patterns reflect regional inequality, a descriptive comparison was conducted between job postings located in Jakarta and those outside the capital.

Table 5. Comparison of Median Wages and Dominant Language Use in Digital Marketing Job Vacancies in Jakarta and Non-Jakarta Regions

Category	Num. of Job Vacancies	Vacancies Displaying Salary	Median Wage (IDR)*	English	Indonesian	Other
Jakarta	491	198	6.000.000	307 (62,5%)	183 (37,3%)	1
Non-Jakarta	496	225	4.500.000	185 (37,3%)	308 (62,1%)	3

*Median Wage was calculated from Job Vacancies with Shown Minimum Wage

Source: Processed

The analysis shows that nearly half of the digital marketing job postings in the dataset are located in Jakarta, offering higher median wages and demonstrating a more dominant use of English compared to postings outside Jakarta. This reinforces Jakarta's position as the central reference point for professional standards in Indonesia's digital marketing labor market. English is employed as a marker of more valued competence in the metropolitan labor center, while outside Jakarta, Indonesian language remains more widely used and the compensation offered tends to be lower. Thus, language becomes a mechanism to distinguish the value of workers across regions, indirectly reinforcing inequalities between Jakarta and the rest of Indonesia within the digital marketing industry.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study set out to examine how language shapes skill requirements and constructs symbolic hierarchies in the digital marketing job market. Semantic network analysis revealed that language is not merely a neutral medium but a strategic tool used to frame perceptions of job value and access. The bipartite network showed that English is predominantly used to describe senior-level roles and is associated with higher salaries, while Indonesian appears more in entry-level or operational listings. This reflects linguistic imperialism, where English is symbolically elevated to signal professionalism and elite status—reinforcing inequalities in the labor market.

However, this symbolic elevation does not always lead to fair compensation. The analysis of

the monopartite network revealed deeper forms of hegemony: job titles that appear prestigious—such as "Manager" or "Specialist"—often fail to offer higher economic value. Meanwhile, roles that require a high number of skills are strategically framed with low-status labels like "Intern" or "Remote," allowing employers to justify minimal compensation. These inconsistencies across structurally related roles indicate that job value is shaped more by symbolic framing than by actual workload or qualifications. The widespread absence of salary information, especially in entry-level roles, further weakens job seekers' bargaining power and normalizes wage opacity as a standard industry practice. These findings reveal how employer hegemony operates through language—subtly shaping perceptions, obscuring inequality, and reinforcing asymmetrical power in the labor market.

In light of these insights, several recommendations emerge. Job seekers, particularly in digital marketing, should develop more extensive hard skills while critically assessing how job titles shape perceptions of value. English proficiency remains crucial for accessing higher-paying, senior-level positions. Employers are encouraged to implement more transparent and competency-based compensation systems to promote fairness and accountability.

The findings of this study also provide empirical evidence that language is strategically used to legitimize job hierarchies and labor valuation in the digital marketing sector. Senior-sounding job titles and English-dominant descriptions are used to construct perceptions of higher status and competence, even when compensation and workload do not align with these symbolic claims. This practice enables employers to normalize inequality by obscuring wage suppression behind the façade of prestigious language. To address these inequitable recruitment practices, the government as policymakers can strengthen the implementation of two existing labor regulations. Presidential Regulation Law (*Perpres*) No. 57/2023 on Mandatory Job Vacancy Reporting requires employers to disclose essential job information, including titles, required competencies, and wage offers. Full enforcement—especially regarding wage transparency—will prevent symbolic job titling from being used to conceal low compensation. It will also support the state in conducting more accurate labor market surveillance.

Similarly, the Ministerial Regulation Law (*Permenaker*) No. 18/2024 on Domestic Workforce Placement mandates the alignment of job classification with actual job value. Article (*Pasal*) 24 explicitly requires the use of the Indonesian Standard Classification of Occupations (KBJI) and the National Occupation Dictionary (KJN) to ensure standardized job titles, codes, and task descriptions. Strengthening enforcement of this article will reduce the inflation of titles such as "Senior," "Manager," or "Specialist" when the responsibilities remain equivalent to entry-level roles—an issue highlighted in this study. Article 29 further obligates employers to disclose complete job information, including wages, competencies, and workload, through the SIAPKerja system. This is particularly relevant given the wage opacity observed in the dataset, which weakens job seekers' bargaining power and reinforces employer dominance.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged to support more precise interpretation of its findings. First, the data were collected within a one-month period, following Jobstreet's system restriction that displays job postings only from the past 30 days. This temporal limitation may introduce seasonal bias, as hiring trends in digital marketing could shift across different economic cycles. Second, the dataset was drawn exclusively from Jobstreet, which, although recognized as one of the most widely used recruitment platforms in Indonesia, does not represent all employers in the digital industry. Platform-specific characteristics may therefore influence the linguistic patterns and wage structures observed in this study.

Despite these limitations, the dataset of 987 job postings remains substantially larger than what most survey-based labor studies are able to capture, offering a robust foundation for semantic network analysis. Nonetheless, future research should expand the scope of platforms and observation periods to improve generalizability and capture broader variations in recruitment narratives. Additionally, qualitative or comparative approaches—such as interviews with job seekers and employers or cross-platform linguistic analysis—would deepen understanding of how symbolic job titling and language requirements shape labor inequality in digital industries. Such developments would further strengthen evidence-based policy advocacy for transparency and fairness in Indonesia's labor market.

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