

# Monitor Model Theory as a Solution to Overcome the Problem of Mastering Arabic Grammar Among Students in Malaysia

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**Abstract**—The issue of mastery of Arabic grammar has long been discussed by researchers as well as academicians. Until now, the problem of students' Arabic grammar mastery in Malaysia has been a grievance of teachers in schools and lecturers in Institutions of Higher Learning. There are two divisions of grammatical aspects that are difficult for students which have been identified, firstly the use of *al-kalimat* (words) and secondly, the use of *at-tarakib* (sentence construction). Therefore, this paper aims to discuss the problem of Arabic grammar mastery of students in Malaysia as well as how the role of Monitor Model Theory acts as a solution to address the problem of Arabic grammar mastery based on secondary sources. It also discusses the history of the development of Arabic language, the syllabus of the Arabic language curriculum in religious secondary schools as well as the learning of Arabic grammar in the *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah* Syllabus and the *Kemahiran Bersepadu Dini* Syllabus. This paper will contribute to the knowledge of more effective teaching methods or approaches which in turn have an impact on pedagogy in the teaching of Arabic grammar to improve the students' understanding and reduce their errors in learning Arabic grammar.

**Index Terms**—monitor model theory, grammar mastery problem, Arabic language, Malaysian students

## I. INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature proves that the mastery of Arabic grammar among students is still at an alarming rate. Previous researchers have also proven that there are two types of students' difficulties in learning Arabic grammar, namely the use of *al-kalimat* الكلمات (words) and also *at-tarakib* التراكيب (sentence construction) (Sokri & Ismail, 2017; Mokhtar et al., 2017; Ismail et al., 2021). It is important for students to be able to master the use of *al-kalimat* to produce grammatical *at-tarakib*.

The Monitor Theory introduced by Krashen (1981) focuses on the sequence of acquisition of students' grammar. This is based on Chomsky's view where humans are biologically endowed with a language acquisition device (LAD) which is also called an innate mechanism. This LAD serves as a tool that receives inputs and serves to determine the sequence of acquisitions that is initially obtained or vice versa. For second or foreign language learning, a monitor that

serves as a monitoring tool will ensure whether the grammatical aspects used are correct or otherwise during speech or writing, provided that adequate time is allocated in grammar learning which focuses on the grammatical forms or structures and the knowledge of grammatical methods.

In addition, the input received by students in grammar learning should be higher than the existing knowledge as it can give great impact on their attitude, motivation and self-confidence in grammar learning. Therefore, this paper aims to discuss further how Monitor Theory Model acts as a solution to students' mastery of grammar. This is important as it can give benefits to educators and academicians. Furthermore, it also gives an impact towards the pedagogy of Arabic grammar as well as the development of Arabic language education in Malaysia.

#### A. History of the Development of Arabic Language Education in Malaysia

The teaching and learning of Arabic is not something new to the community in Malaysia. This can be seen based on the teaching and learning activities which have existed since the reign of Malacca state government that has become the center of international trade for about 500 years ago (Muhammad et al., 2006) until today. The Arabic language has its own specialty and it is highly positioned especially among the Malay community (Ismail, 1994; Yaacob, 2017), in which it is learnt to understand the Quran. The uniqueness of the Arabic language can be seen in the use of *Jawi* script which is taken from the Arabic alphabets before the independence, and it is widely used in Malaysian society (Khalid, 1994). In addition, the Arabic language has contributed a lot to the Malay language vocabulary (Khalid, 1994; Mezah, 2009) especially words which are related to religion and education (Khalid, 1994), worship and religious activities.

The teaching and learning of Arabic in the Malay community has started since pre-school education until higher education (Sahid & Fettane, 2019). Back then, the teaching and learning of Arabic was taught in *pondok* system (Samah, 2012; Zaini et al., 2019) using the traditional method. This method focuses on the teacher (formerly called master teacher) who gave lecture to the students by reading and explaining the translated Arabic book verse by verse and the students wrote as well as memorized what they had learnt till they graduated (Ishak, 1995). This *pondok* education system has grown extensively in almost every state in Malaysia (Samah, 2012).

The teaching and learning of Arabic has continued until Malaysia achieved independence in 1957, where the institutions of Islamic Studies have officially established in the form of *madrasah* system or school system in early 20th century (Nordin, 2005; Samah, 2012). At the end of the 20th century, Arabic language was regarded as an important subject and it was placed under the Islamic and Moral Education Curriculum Division, Department of Islamic and Moral Education, Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) and there were also religious schools found under the state government and state religious council (Nordin, 2005). The teaching and learning of Arabic is categorized into two parts, namely *Bahasa Arab Tinggi* (Higher Arabic) and *Bahasa Arab Komunikasi* (Communication Arabic) (Sardi & Majid, 2004) and they have been placed under the *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah* (Secondary School Standard Curriculum) and *Kemahiran Bersepadu Dini* (Early Integrated Skills).

Meanwhile, the teaching and learning of Arabic at public and private higher education institutions like colleges and universities has started in the era of 1980s (Nordin, 2005). Today, it has become either a compulsory subject or as an elective course at diploma, bachelor and doctoral level (Mustapa & Arifin, 2012; Yaacob, 2017). Among the early universities to establish the Department of Arabic Language and Islamic Civilization are Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) (Mustapa & Arifin, 2012; Arifin et al., 2012) followed by the International Islamic University (IIUM), then Universiti Malaya (UM) followed by Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia and Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UNISZA) (Mustapa & Arifin, 2012). Meanwhile, at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), Arabic language courses are provided for all students, staff and general public. The course has been conducted by the Arabic Language Unit which is placed under the Department of Asian and European Languages (JBAE), the Academy of Language Studies (ALS) that was established in the 60s (Mohamad et al., 1999).

#### B. Arabic Language Curriculum Syllabus in Religious Secondary Schools in Malaysia

In Malaysia, there are two Arabic language curriculum syllabi used in religious secondary schools, namely:

##### (a). *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah (KSSM)*

In 2017, *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah* (KSSM) is the Secondary School Standard Curriculum which was implemented in stages at *Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama* (SMKA) starting from Form 1 to Form 5 students (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). The implementation of KSSM uses the Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document (DSKP). For Arabic language subjects, the textbook entitled *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah* is used for Form 1 until Form 5 students. Based on the circular letter of the *Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia* (Ministry of Education Malaysia) No. 6 of 2019 (KPM.100-1/3/1 vol.2 (7)), the Secondary School Standard Curriculum syllabus is a syllabus formulated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia from the *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (KBSM-Secondary School Integrated Curriculum) syllabus. This is because the *Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia* (PPPM-Malaysian Education Development Plan) 2013-2025 has recommended the KBSM syllabus to be revised in accordance with the development of 21st century education so that students are able to master skills such as critical thinking, high-level thinking, creative thinking and innovative thinking. The use of the KSSM syllabus in learning Arabic is elective and it is not compulsory for all students in secondary schools. However, for those who are interested

to pursue their studies at university level in Arabic language and Islamic studies, they are required to learn Arabic Language at secondary level.

(b). *Kemahiran Bersepadu Dini (KBD)*

*Kemahiran Bersepadu Dini (KBD)* is the Early Integrated Skills Syllabus that was implemented in *Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan (SABK- Government Aided Religious Schools)*, *Sekolah Agama Negeri (SAN- State Religious Schools)* and *Sekolah Agama Rendah (SAR- Primary Religious Schools)*. Based on the *Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia* notification letter (KPM.BPI.100.611.47 vol.4 (64), the KBD syllabus was implemented in 2015 except for SABK in Negeri Sembilan and SABK Tun Ahmad Zaidi Sarawak, in which its implementation began in 2016. For Arabic language subjects, the textbook entitled *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah al-Mu'asirah* is used for students from Form 1 to Form 5. This KBD syllabus is divided into three parts based on Arabic language skills, namely *al-kitabah* (writing skills), *al-qira'ah* (reading skills) and *al-istima' wa al-kalam* (listening and speaking skills) (Khatib & Zainal, 2018). This is because KBD curriculum emphasizes the need of mastering the four language skills by students. KBD curriculum was introduced to produce knowledgeable and skilled students in Arabic Language. Based on the document of Standard Curriculum *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah al-Mu'asirah* 2014, the syllabus in the textbook *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah al-Mu'asirah* emphasizes on the mastery of Arabic vocabulary whereby there are approximately 2000 words introduced. Therefore, it was found that the KBD syllabus focuses more on vocabulary learning (Khatib & Zainal, 2018) rather than grammar aspects.

The learning of Arabic grammar is studied according to the topics in the textbook *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah KSSM* 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 and the textbook entitled *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah al-Mu'asirah KBD* 2015, 2017 and 2018 from Form 1 to Form 5. It focuses on words (الكلمات) as well as sentence construction (التركيب). Among the parts of words studied are introduction to nouns (الاسم) from gender aspects such as masculine (مذكر) and feminine (مؤنث), nouns by numbers like singular (مفرد), dual nouns *muthanna* (مثنى) and plural (جمع), pronoun (الضمائر), *masdar* noun (مصدر), number (*al-adad* and *al-ma'dud*), preposition (حروف الجر), demonstrative pronoun (الاسم الإشارة) and derivation (مشتقات). There are also types of verbs (الفعل) studied such as present tense (المضارع), past tense (الماضي), command verbs (الأمر) as well as prepositional verbs (المزيد).

Meanwhile the types of sentence construction (*at-tarakib*-التركيب) studied in the KSSM and KBD curriculum are noun sentences (الجملة الإسمية) and verb sentences (الجملة الفعلية), *at-tarkib al-idafiyy* (التركيب الإضافي) and *at-tarkib an-na'tiyy* (التركيب النعتي). The Arabic grammar in KSSM and KBD textbooks is learned in order of topics and some are learned together. This topic of grammar needs to be well understood so that students can use the words to build grammatical sentences to master the Arabic language skill.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. A Study of Arabic Grammar Mastery Among Students in Malaysia

The development of Arabic language education has encouraged the language researchers to study the issues on teaching and learning the language itself. The position of Arabic in Malaysia as a third language (L3) followed by Malay (L1) and English (L2) has also contributed to the existence of issues on Arabic language mastery. Figure 1 shows the process of mastering Arabic as a third language:

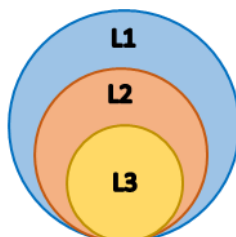


Figure 1 The Process of Mastering the Arabic Language

Based on figure 1, Arabic is learned when students have mastered the first language (L1) and the second language (L2). This situation causes students to have difficulty in understanding some grammatical methods of the Arabic language due to grammatical differences in terms of word formation as well as the construction of phrases or sentences. There are confusions over sentence structure construction (Samah, 2012), the use of word forms or patterns, the use of pronoun (Sokri & Ismail, 2017) and the use of verbs (الفعل) (Mokhtar et al., 2020). Apart from that, the complexity of Arabic grammar from the aspect of genus or gender (Ismail et al., 2014; Sokri & Ismail, 2017) as well as *al-adad* (number) are the difficulties in learning Arabic grammar (Mat & Soon, 2010; Ismail et al., 2018). Students still have not mastered the rules of sentence structure construction and word change (transform) in Arabic grammar since they are still being influenced by their mother tongue (Malay language) (Awang et al., 2014).

Some studies that have been done by researchers such as Hussin et al. (2015), Karim and Husaini (2016), Hamid et al. (2017), Mokhtar et al. (2020) and also Baharum and Rahman (2020) have proven that students' mastery of Arabic grammar is still poor where this can affect their performance in learning the language. Previous researchers have also

found that students face two types of difficulties in learning Arabic grammar namely the use of words (الكلمات) and sentence construction (التركيب).

One of the difficulties is the use of verbs (الفعل), for example, a study by Sokri and Ismail (2017) who have collected data through the writing of Arabic essays. Their results showed that students find it more difficult to use past tense verb (الفعل الماضي) than the present tense verb (الفعل المضارع) that is by using the present tense verb "يعملون" (they do) in construction of the sentence "they did". Their findings are in line with the study conducted by Ismail et al. (2021) who also found it is more difficult for students to use past tense than present tense, for example in the sentence "أنتهي من" (I finish from high school last year) by using present tense "أنتهي" (I finish) which should be the past tense verb "انتهيت" (I finished).

Sopian (2019) also found that students find it difficult to use verbs in learning Arabic grammar. However, his findings show that it is difficult for students to use present tense in sentence writing. The students did errors in terms of forming verbs to the appropriate perpetrator in sentence writing. The example is in the sentence "كل يوم أناقش الدروس و" (every day I discuss lessons and you write exercises). The students form the present tense "تكتب" (you write), instead of "أكتب" (I write) because the doer refers to the first person (me). The findings of Sopian's (2019) study are different from the study of Sokri and Ismail (2017) and the study of Ismail et al. (2021).

Apart from that, study done by Ismail et al. (2021) has identified errors in number (العدد) such as the failure of students in using the word "ثلاث" (number 3) which is *muzakkar* (masculine) for *ma'dud* (which is counted) which is *muzakkar* in the construction of the sentence "ثلاث طلاب" (3 male students). This is because the rules of Arabic grammar define the plurals from 3 to 10 should be considered when constructing the correct phrase and numbers (معدود) opposite gender and *ma'dud* should be in plural form.

In terms of sentence construction (التركيب), Sokri and Ismail (2017) found that students find it difficult to construct noun sentences (الجملة الاسمية) and also sentences that have the phrase *as-sifah* (الصفة) that uses the phrase *al-idafah* (الإضافة). This finding is further strengthened by the findings of Sopian (2019) which also found that students were confused of using the phrase *as-sifah* and the phrase *al-idafah* in sentence construction. Students were confused in forming *at-tarkib al-idafiyy* in the verse *at-tarkib an-na'tiyy* and forming *at-tarkib an-na'tiyy* in the verse *at-tarkib al-idafiyy*.

The study conducted by Mokhtar et al. (2017) also found that students have not mastered well the aspects of construction of noun sentences (الجملة الاسمية) and verb sentences (الجملة الفعلية) and *at-tarkib al-idafiyy* from the dual (مثنى) and plural (جمع) form with average percentage. They have collected data using questionnaires as well as Arabic grammar mastery test questions. Through the Arabic grammar mastery test questions, only 18% of the students answered correctly for the question that tested them about the noun sentences (الجملة الاسمية) and 6% who correctly answered the verb sentences (الجملة الفعلية) and 43% who answered correctly for *at-tarkib al-idafiyy*. The findings of the study done by Ismail et al. (2021) also supported the study of Mokhtar et al. (2017) which indicated that students who confused over the grammar rules of Arabic as a second language (L2) and those who have different language from their first language (L1) are the main factors that lead to students' errors in learning Arabic grammar.

The study done by Ismail et al. (2021) found that students are not able to construct *at-tarkib al-idafiyy* according to the correct grammatical rules, instead they have constructed sentences that disagree with Arabic grammar method. This can be seen in the student sentence such as "أرى النور في الوجه والدين" (I see there is light on the faces of both parents). The construction of the sentence "الوجه والدين" violates the rules of Arabic grammar because the word "الوجه" (face) is *mudaf* (مضاف) which needs to be *nakirah* (نكرة) by not including the letters *alif* and *lam* (ال) at the beginning of the word.

Past studies have found that among the factors of students' weaknesses in understanding the rules of Arabic grammar is due to the teaching methods used by teachers which are not appropriate and less effective (Zaini et al., 2019). This is because teachers are still using the traditional teaching methods (Samah, 2014; Ariffin@Riffin & Taat, 2020) in teaching Arabic grammar such as grammar and translation (Samah, 2012; Sahid & Fettane, 2019) and memorization without paying attention to the real problems that students face. This situation causes students to be less skilled and to have passive attitude which in turn affect students' performance in learning Arabic (Hamid et al., 2017; Sahid & Fettane, 2019).

Apart from that, the textbooks used by teachers are also particularly important in learning Arabic grammar. This is because textbooks which contain syllabus for each topic taught are the main source of teachers and students (Ghazali et al., 2015; Sopian, 2017). The teaching method used by teachers also depends on the content is presented in the textbook used. Using textbooks is one of the important factors that determine the level of mastery and achievement of Arabic language among students apart from other factors like teachers, environment and students themselves (Sopian, 2017). Therefore, the organisation of the textbook content should be appropriate to the abilities and needs of students, especially in learning Arabic grammar.

Sahid and Fettane (2019) stated that the time allocated in learning Arabic grammar is inadequate where it affects the performance and quality of students. In addition, there is no specific time allocated in learning Arabic grammar. Normally, the subject of Arabic grammar is taught during the Communication Arabic lesson. On the other hand, students who study abroad are required to learn Arabic grammar as a compulsory subject. This has affected the performance and quality of students in learning Arabic subjects compared to those who are in Malaysia (Sahid & Fettane, 2019).

### B. Monitor Theory Model as a Solution to Arabic Grammar Mastery Problems

The Monitor theory introduced by Krashen (1981; 1982) was based on the sequence of grammatical morpheme acquisition (Kwon, 2005) conducted by the previous researchers such as Dulay and Burt (1973; 1974), Freeman (1975; 1976) as well as Bailey et al. (1974) in the 70s to 80s focusing on the study of second language acquisition (Izumi & Isahara, 2004).

Through a survey by researchers, studies on the sequence of morpheme acquisition in the field of grammar are abundant in the field of English studies. For example, Dulay and Burt's studies in 1973 and 1974 found a similar sequence of acquisitions from three groups of children at the aged from 6 to 8 years. The first group has 95 Chicano children from Sacramento California, while the second group has 26 Mexican children from San Ysidro California and the third group has 30 Puerto Rican children from the East Harlem area of New York. The results of their studies found that there is a sequence of acquisition of grammatical morphemes that have been mastered earlier like the word plural "s" while the progressive form -ing has been mastered later by the students. While other grammatical morphemes such as irregular past tense, third person singular present tense -s and possessive - 's are mastered later by students. The results of this study also showed that the sequence of acquisition of second language morphemes acquisition was the same regardless of age (Dulay & Burt, 1973; Krashen, 1981; 1982; Morais, 1991; Izumi & Isahara, 2004; Kwon, 2005).

In addition, there are several studies that also focus on the sequence of acquisition of grammatical morphemes such as studies conducted by Kwon (2005), Bahrani (2011), Abukhattala (2013), Barrot and De Leon (2014). Yet these studies focus more on the sequence of English grammatical morphemes. While studies in the field of Arabic grammar focus a lot on grammar mastery without discussing the sequence of acquisition which was discussed in the previous studies in the Arabic grammar field.

Knowledge of this sequence of acquisition is important so that educators and academics can structure the curriculum according to the sequence of acquisition and mastery of students (Izumi & Isahara, 2004). In addition, research findings on acquisition sequences will be able to contribute to more effective teaching methods or approaches which in turn give impact to language teaching pedagogy in order to improve students' comprehension and reduce their errors in learning (Kwon, 2005).

An interesting finding found in grammatical morpheme acquisition research is that the acquisition of grammatical structures occurs in a predictable sequence. This means that a language learner tends to acquire certain grammatical structures early and there are those that students acquire late. An early sequence means it is easy to master while a late sequence means it is difficult to master. Chomsky (2006) states this situation because humans are biologically endowed with a language acquisition device (LAD) which is also referred to as an innate mechanism. This LAD serves as a tool that receives inputs or inputs whose role is to determine the sequence of acquisitions that are initially obtained or vice versa. He further states that a human being naturally has an ability to speak in himself known as universal grammar (Guat, 2006; Jumhana, 2014). This can be explained in the following figure 2:

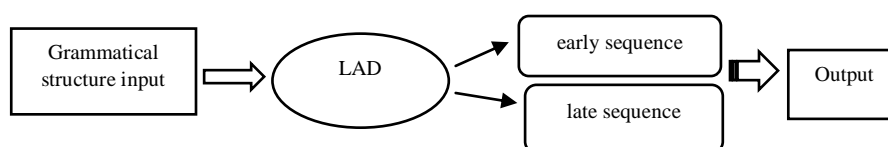


Figure 2 The Role of LAD as a Tool of Receiving Grammatical Structure Input

Krashen Monitor Theory Model puts forward five hypotheses namely:

#### (a). Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

Krashen (1981; 1982) states that there are two methods for a person to master and acquire his first second language through the process of acquisition and the second through the process of learning. The process of acquisition is a process that occurs unconsciously (subconscious) through informal learning referred to as implicit (Krashen, 1982) with an emphasis on the meaning to be conveyed (Abukhattala, 2013). While the second way is a learning process that needs to be through formal education called explicit, which is a process that occurs in a conscious state by focusing on the grammatical structure, in order to know the grammar method of the second language (Bahrani, 2011; Abukhattala, 2013). This formal education serves as a monitor (monitoring tool) that provides output or results to a person orally as well as in writing (Krashen, 1981; 1982). Krashen (1982) states "Conscious learning is available only as a "monitor", which can alter the output of the acquired system before or after the utterance is actually spoken or written" (Krashen, 1982, p.16).

In Malaysia, learning Arabic is through formal education. This means, the process of learning Arabic is through conscious learning which acts as a monitor that can be seen through the results (output) when students practice grammar in the form of communication or speech or writing. Through this hypothesis, the teaching of Arabic grammar should be given emphasis on the form or structure of Arabic grammar. For example, in the learning of nouns (الاسم) from the aspect of number such as singular nouns, *muthanna* (dual) and plural which have significant differences from the aspect of word form such as the noun معلم (one teacher), معلمان (two teachers) and معلمون (several teachers). A good understanding of the form or structure of this grammar is necessary as it impacts the meaning to be conveyed.

(b). *Natural Order Hypothesis*

The natural order hypothesis is one of the important elements in the Monitor Theory of this model. It is also known as natural order which states that the acquisition of a form or grammatical structure for second language learners can occur through natural order. This means that some grammatical structures are acquired earlier while some are acquired later (Krashen, 1982; Bahrani, 2011). The early sequence obtained means a sequence that is easy to master while the late sequence is a sequence that is difficult to master. The sequence of difficult grammatical structures is not necessarily as we might expect (Abukhattala, 2013). Through this natural sequence hypothesis, students' mistakes and errors can also be seen when students have not mastered the grammatical structure used.

In Arabic language learning, it is important to know information on the natural sequence of grammatical aspects which is based on the sequence of students' mastery. By knowing this, the mastery of grammar aspects whether it is easy or difficult can be identified. Arabic grammar is learned indirectly in every chapter in the textbook if it is examined through the use of KSSM and KBD syllabus. Most grammar topics are studied periodically and there are also different topics studied simultaneously without considering the easy and difficult sequences. This can lead to confusion as students need to distinguish the form or structure of Arabic grammar and its use in sentences.

(c). *Monitor Hypothesis*

Monitor is a self-monitor that involves learning consciously. This conscious learning that acts as a self-monitor can alter the output obtained either before or after an utterance is spoken or written (Krashen, 1982). Krashen also stated that the monitor will be able to function properly based on three conditions that need to be met, namely:

- a. Sufficient time allocated
- b. Focus on the form
- c. Knowledge of grammatical methods (Krashen, 1982; Gregg, 1984)

The process of teaching and learning Arabic grammar formally in this class will provide new information to students. The new information that results from this teaching and learning process acts as a self-monitoring monitor that can change the output obtained by students when they need to use it in speaking or writing. This depends on the sufficient time allocated in the teaching and learning of Arabic grammar. In addition, teaching should focus more on the form and structure of grammar that give the impact in terms of the meaning and students have a good knowledge in the aspects of Arabic grammar.

(d). *Input Hypothesis*

Input hypothesis is an input received because of the learning process. This input hypothesis states that an input received should exceed the existing level and students can best understand the language input obtained through listening or reading. This input process is seen based on the formula from level  $i$  (current competency) to develop to level  $i+1$  when students understand well the input obtained. This level of  $i+1$  indicates the ability and competence of students are beyond the existing level (Krashen, 1982; Abukhattala, 2013).

Based on this input hypothesis, students will master the Arabic grammar successfully when they themselves receive the input more than they expect and understand well the learning of Arabic grammar. Therefore, teachers need to give more emphasis on the aspects of *al-kalimat* (words) and *at-tarakib* (sentences) when teaching Arabic grammar. That is, each Arabic grammar topic which is studied should be given more input than the existing ones either in word form or in sentence construction. In fact, more emphasis should also be given on the ones which are difficult to acquire. In addition, trainings or drills should be designed based on the students' frequent errors.

(e). *Affective Filter Hypothesis*

The affective filter hypothesis states that importance of second language acquisition depends on the factors like high attitude, motivation, and confidence as well as low anxiety. This is because attitude, motivation and high confidence will cause the affective filter to be low, as a result, students will be able to receive the input effectively in learning the second language. However, when attitude, motivation and confidence are low, the anxiety will increase which causes the affective filter to be high. This situation will have a negative impact on second language achievement because the resulting mental block will affect the comprehensible input of the second language (Krashen, 1982; Bahrani, 2011).

Although this Monitor Theory refers to the acquisition of a second language, it is also suitable for a third language or known as foreign language. Ellis (1997) states that a second language refers to several languages which are learned after the first language. This refers to a second or third language or other foreign languages. This is because the process of acquiring a second language and a third language or foreign language must go through the same learning process that is formal learning (Kridalaksana, 1983). In Malaysia, learning English and Arabic as a second or third language needs to go through formal learning. Figure 3 below shows how Monitor Theory Model works in addressing the problem of Arabic grammar mastery:

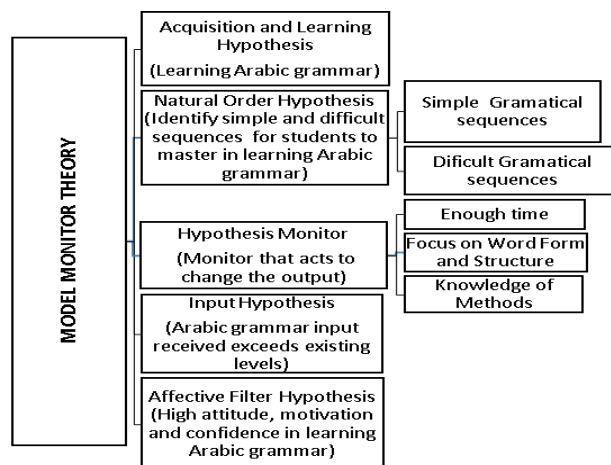


Figure 3 Monitor Theory Model as a Solution to Overcome the Problem of Arabic Grammar

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Mastery of Arabic grammar is important to improve language skills, especially reading, writing and speaking skills apart from vocabulary mastery. If we look at the results of previous studies, students' knowledge and mastery of Arabic grammar has not yet reached a satisfactory level that can impact students' performance in language skills. Based on the KSSM and KBD curriculum syllabus, the focus is more on vocabulary mastery compared to Arabic grammar. Although vocabulary mastery is important in improving students' language skills, students' weaknesses in Arabic grammar will affect the construction of correct sentences based on Arabic grammar methods. The proposed subject of *Qawaid Arabiyyah* (Arabic grammar) as a compulsory subject to be taken in learning Arabic in addition to the existing curriculum is necessary to strengthen the mastery of Arabic grammar. In addition, the compilation of Arabic grammar syllabus in the curriculum based on *al-kalimat* (words) and *at-tarakib* (sentences) should be arranged in both simple and difficult order for students to master the form and structure of Arabic words based on Arabic grammar methods. The grammatical aspects of Arabic that are difficult to master can be seen based on students' errors in learning *al-kalimat* and *at-tarakib*. Sokri and Ismail (2017) stated that the aspects of students' errors in teaching and learning need to be emphasized. Ismail et al. (2021) suggested that the right teaching approach needs to be implemented by considering the level of mistakes made by students. In addition, the approach such as checking students' mistakes face to face also helps students to identify their mistakes and correct them straightaway (Sopian, 2019). Therefore, it is hoped that this paper can contribute to the academic and development of research in the field of Arabic grammar so that the mastery of Arabic grammar can be improved and the goal of language skills will be achieved successfully.

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