

## Surgical approach to the cerebellopontine angle and dissection of the temporal bone: a continuing medical education course at Hacettepe University

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When two complex structures like cerebellum and pons build up an angle, the one formed is not simple like the ones formed by two intersecting lines in geometry, but one, difficult to understand even by the people who see and cut it every day. To get close to a tumor here, one will have to cut the complex temporal bone but from which direction and how? Answering to a question like this and many difficult others in one day was the aim of this meeting. Diverging the attention to the surgical techniques and anatomy, rather than the indications of surgery made this goal accomplished successfully.

There were 30 participants, of almost equal numbers of anatomists, otolaryngologists and neurosurgeons, by coincidence. Even this was giving a good clue about how the chosen field was in the center of clinical and basic science cooperation. The plenary session started and chaired by Ruhgun Basar. The first presentation by Nuran Yener was giving every detail of clinical anatomy of the temporal bone. Following, Sarp Sarac presented mastoidectomy and facial nerve decompression techniques with beautiful schematic slides and real operation movies. The movies were cleverly montaged focusing on the important moments and landmarks and cropping out the intervals in between. Otherwise the movies of these long operations can be more difficult to watch than doing the operation.

After a fifteen minute coffee break, the second session started with the beautiful presentation of Levent Sennaroglu about labyrinthectomy and translabyrinthine approach to the cerebellopontine angle. He described medial, lateral and inferior approaches which are used for different purposes. The next presentation was about anatomy of the neurovascular structures of the cerebellopontine angle by Beliz Tascioglu. Her presentation was mostly by real photographs and their explanatory drawings at each slide. This type of presentation supplied extreme good orientation to the surgeons besides teaching the complex anatomy of the region.

Ibrahim Ziyal presented the middle cranial and retrosigmoid approach of the neurosurgeons. He also demonstrated some operational movies and gave important clues to the surgeons. The discussion became interesting by participation of Dr Gokhan Akdemir and his experiences from his studies with the famous surgeon Dr Mecit Sami.

At the lunch everybody was fascinated with the presentations of the morning and waiting impatiently for the practical part which would be held in the anatomy dissection laboratory. The practicals were not less successful. The anatomy laboratory has almost turned to an operation hall or even better with the dissection microscopes screened widely and clearly viewed from all over the saloon and the voice of the operator amplified to be heard by everyone. The equipment for the surgical demonstrations were excellent, most of them were just taken out from their boxes. Each approach to the cerebellopontine angle was demonstrated on the cadavers by experienced surgeons Sarp Sarac, Levent Sennaroglu and Ibrahim Ziyal. Afterwards, the participants were encouraged to practice all the approaches and they had the chance to ask the demonstrators to redemonstrate.

The practicals were finalized with a closing session held in the Anatomy laboratory, this time including the indications for various approaches to cerebellopontine angle. This session was moderated by Ibrahim Ziyal, there occurred a very useful discussion between Osman E. Ozcan, Bulent Gursel and Levent Sennaroglu.

A very beautiful dinner was waiting for the participants as the final event of the day. It was held at the second campus of Hacettepe University (Beytepe campus), at a

sightseeing restaurant-bar “Bright House”.

This meeting concerning the surgical approach to the cerebellopontine angle and dissection of the temporal bone was accomplished with the contribution of authors from both preclinical and clinical fields. The presentations were of very high quality and the participants benefited from every speech and discussion. The community plans similar meetings for the next years.



**Figure 1.** Dr. Ibrahim M. Ziyal – associate professor of neurosurgery at Hacettepe University – demonstrating the middle cranial approach to the cerebellopontine angle.



**Figure 2.** The participants and lecturers of ‘Surgical Approach to the Cerebellopontine Angle and Dissection of the Temporal Bone’ course at Hacettepe University, March 26, 2004.