ABSTRACT

Introduction:

Developmental anomalies in the origin and branching pattern of the external carotid artery are not common. The level of the bifurcation of the common carotid artery and also the variations in the origin and branching pattern of the external carotid artery were documented.

Methods:

The variations in the level of bifurcation of the common carotid artery (CCA) and the branching pattern of the external carotid artery were studied on 25 cadavers. The common, external and internal carotid arteries were dissected on both sides in the carotid triangle. The level of carotid bifurcation was determined. Branching patterns of the external carotid arteries were examined.

Results:

The external carotid artery (ECA) originated at the level of upper border of thyroid cartilage in 92% cases, while in 8% cases it was arising at a higher level. In one of the specimen, the ECA was laterally transposed. In 58% cases, superior thyroid artery was coming from ECA, 26% specimens revealed its origin from carotid bifurcation, 12% from CCA and rest 4% were occurring as thyrolingual trunk. 22% of cases showed the linguofacial trunks. There was no variation noted with the termination of ECA.
Conclusion:

This study therby mentions about the variations of the origin and branches of the ECA which imparts important knowledge that is especially useful for surgeons who operate on the face and neck regions, as well as for radiologists in the interpretation of imagings.

Keywords:

Common carotid artery, external carotid artery, thyrolingual trunk, linguofacial trunk.