Exhaustivity and bare numeral phrases in Mandarin

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A well-known generalization about bare numeral phrases (BNPs) in Mandarin is that they tend to require the existential verb *you* ‘have’ when in subject position, but there are some notable exceptions. This paper concentrates on the data cited by Li (1998) and proposes an *Exhaustivity Condition* according to which a subject BNP is felicitous if and only if it is interpreted exhaustively. It is shown how this condition generalizes to all the constructions under discussion, while at the same time they each belong to a particular type of quantificational construction or another (cumulativity, scalar focus, sufficiency, or conditional). I argue that the close relation between Mandarin subject BNPs and exhaustivity not only explains the restricted distribution of the former but also enables us to account for their so-called quantity readings in terms of exhaustive interpretation. Comparisons of the proposal with previous approaches will also be discussed.

**Keywords:** bare numeral phrase, quantity interpretation, exhaustivity, cumulativity, focus, sufficiency