ENTAILMENT

Interpreting utterances involves a considerable amount of guesswork. The hearer has to draw inferences from the speaker's words to arrive at the speaker's intended meaning.

ENTAILMENT: a relationship between sentences that forms the basis for some of these inferences.

We do not expect people to tell us something we do not already know. Embedded in every sentence there is a certain amount of understood information that comes from our knowledge of the language itself.

Necessarily true sentences (the knowledge of the language is enough): ANALYTIC SENTENCES.
Necessarily false sentences: CONTRADICTIONS.
Sentences whose truth is based on the world and not on the language: SYNTHETIC SENTENCES.
Either Synthetically true or Synthetically false.

All sentences have a number of **entailments**: sentences which are automatically true if the original sentence is true. Inferences for free. It only requires knowledge of the language being used.

Is **paraphrase** an entailment? In semantics, it is a special type of entailment, yes.

In sentence pairs **1 and 2**, the entailment works in only **one direction**. If Goldilocks saw a bear, then she necessarily saw an animal. But if she saw an animal, she could have seen a bear but not necessarily. It could have been a big bad wolf, for example. If something is too cold, by definition it cannot be too hot. But if the porridge is not too hot, is it necessarily too cold? No. Like Baby Bear's porridge, it could be just right. When there is only ONE-WAY ENTAILMENT, the sentences are not true paraphrases of each other. Sentence pairs **3 and 4** behave somewhat differently. Because of the meaning relationship between cried/wept and in front of/behind, we have a situation of TWO-WAY or MUTUAL ENTAILMENT between the sentences in each pair.

These sentences are **paraphrases** of each other. The term paraphrase is used in semantics when there is a relationship of mutual entailment between two sentences. **Generally speaking, 'entailment', 'analytic sentence' and `contradiction' are considered to be purely semantic concepts, having to do with sentence meaning rather than speaker meaning.**

Summary
- All sentences have a number of entailments - other sentences which are automatically true if the original sentence is true.
- Entailments are inferences that can be drawn solely from our knowledge about the semantic relationships in a language.
- This knowledge allows us to communicate much more than we actually 'say'.

Further reading:
Saeed, "Semantics", p.98-101.