Legal Alien

by Pat Mora

**Bi**-lingual, **Bi-**cultural,   
**able to** slip from “How’s life?”   
to “Me’stan volviendo loca,”   
**able to** sit in a paneled office   
drafting memos in smooth English,   
**able to** order in fluent Spanish   
at a Mexican restaurant,   
American **but** hyphenated,   
viewed by Anglos as perhaps **exotic**,   
perhaps inferior, **d**efinitely **di**fferent,   
viewed by Mexicans as **alien**,   
(their eyes say, “You may speak   
Spanish but you’re not like me”)   
an American to Mexicans   
a Mexican to Americans   
a handy token   
sliding back and forth   
between the **fringe**s of both worlds   
by smiling   
by masking the discomfort   
of being pre-judged   
**Bi**-laterally.

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1. What are the voices of the speaker? Quote the lines that indicate the speaker’s identities
2. How does diction show identity? Examples
3. What is the author’s purpose?
4. What is the speaker’s attitude or tone? Quote examples?