Below link is very good and highly referenced article. Check it out in free time http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/library/j-nativememory-linux/j-nativememory-linux-pdf.pdf

Below thread on SO nicely explains user space & kernel space

http://stackoverflow.com/questions/17208648/linux-kernel-space-and-user-space

Below link gives a nice description of what kernel is.

http://www.linfo.org/kernel.html