Git неявно определяет, что произошло переименование, поэтому неважно, переименуете вы файл так или используя команду mv. Единственное отличие состоит лишь в том, что mv — это одна команда вместо трёх — это функция для удобства. Важнее другое — вы можете использовать любой удобный способ, чтобы переименовать файл, и затем воспользоваться add/rm перед коммитом.

$ git mv README.txt README

$ git status

# On branch master

# Your branch is ahead of 'origin/master' by 1 commit.

#

# Changes to be committed:

# (use "git reset HEAD <file>..." to unstage)

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