

Before we start today...

- Create a Github account
- If possible (or necessary), install Git in your computer (check <https://happygitwithr.com/install-git.html>)

Git for Social Scientists: Introduction to Version Control with Git

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Massachusetts Institute of Technology

October 20th, 2023

¹This slide deck is heavily inspired by the workshop materials by Suyeol Yun and Shiro Kuriwaki.

Introduction



Companies using Git

Introduction



Companies using Git

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[Amazon Web Services](#)

[Amazon](#)

[Ambientia Group Oy](#)

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[arkency](#)

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Companies using Github

Introduction

- Why Git? Why Github? Why version control?

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 - Pros and cons of Git/Github
 - Brief introduction to these tools (how Git/Github works and how to use them)

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- I focus on Git/Github because they are extremely popular than their alternatives

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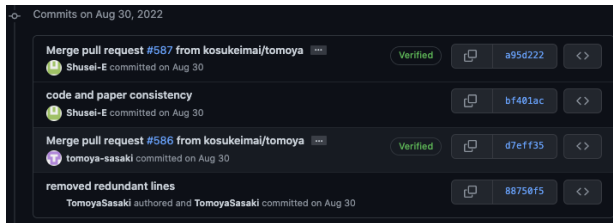
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The screenshot displays a GitHub interface. The top section, titled 'Commits on Aug 30, 2022', lists three commits: a merge pull request #587, a commit titled 'code and paper consistency', and another merge pull request #586. Each entry includes the author's name, a commit hash, and a 'Verified' badge. Below this, a section titled 'removed redundant lines' shows a commit by TomoyaSasaki. The bottom half of the image shows a code diff for a file named 'CythonLDA in Python3'. The diff highlights changes in a Python script, showing the removal of redundant lines (lines 1-3) and the addition of new code (lines 4-10).

Commits on Aug 30, 2022

- Merge pull request #587 from kosukeimai/tomoya
Shusei-E committed on Aug 30
Verified a95d222
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bf401ac
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88750f5

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modified readme 6 years ago

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```
1 from distutils.core import setup
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5 #setup(
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9 #)
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```

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The screenshot displays a GitHub commit history page for August 30, 2022. It features a list of commits with details such as the commit message, the author, the commit hash, and a link to view the code. The commits include merge pull requests #587 and #586, and a commit titled 'removed redundant lines'. Below the commit list, there is a section showing the code changes for a specific commit, with line numbers and the corresponding code snippets.

Commits on Aug 30, 2022

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Commit	Author	When	Code
CythonLDA in Python3	Shusei-E	6 years ago	1 from distutils.core import setup 2 from Cython.Build import cythonize 3 import numpy 4 5 #setup(6 # name = 'ldac', 7 # ext_modules = cythonize('ldac.pyx'), 8 # include_dir = [numpy.get_include()] 9 #) 10
modified readme	tomoya-sasaki	6 years ago	
CythonLDA in Python3	Shusei-E	6 years ago	

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The screenshot displays the GitHub interface for a repository. The top section, titled 'Commits on Aug 30, 2022', lists several commits. The first two are 'Merge pull request #587 from kosukeimai/tomoya' and 'code and paper consistency', both by 'Shusei-E' and committed on Aug 30. The third is 'Merge pull request #586 from kosukeimai/tomoya' by 'tomoya-sasaki', also committed on Aug 30. The fourth commit, 'removed redundant lines', is attributed to 'TomoyaSasaki' and committed on Aug 30. Below this, a table lists files changed in the selected commit: 'CythonLDA in Python3' (6 years ago), 'modified readme' (6 years ago), and 'CythonLDA in Python3' (6 years ago). To the right, a code diff for 'CythonLDA in Python3' is shown, with line numbers 1 through 10. The diff includes imports for 'distutils.core' and 'Cython.Build', and a setup function that configures the extension 'ldac' and includes the numpy header.

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 - the same file edited by different people:
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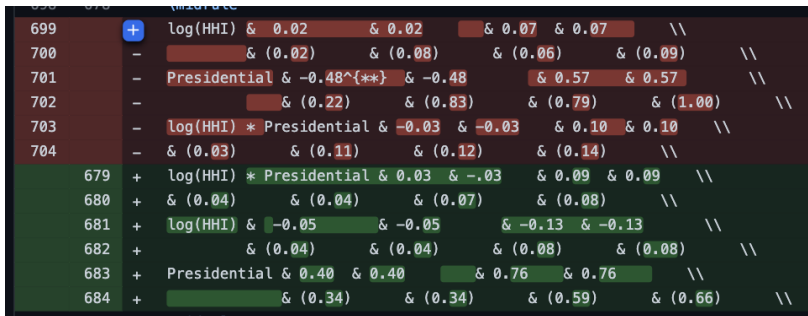
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- You can check how the results change when we try different specification

699	+	log(HHI)	& 0.02	& 0.02	& 0.07	& 0.07	\\
700	-		& (0.02)	& (0.08)	& (0.06)	& (0.09)	\\
701	-	Presidential	& -0.48^{**}	& -0.48	& 0.57	& 0.57	\\
702	-		& (0.22)	& (0.83)	& (0.79)	& (1.00)	\\
703	-	log(HHI) * Presidential	& -0.03	& -0.03	& 0.10	& 0.10	\\
704	-		& (0.03)	& (0.11)	& (0.12)	& (0.14)	\\
679	+	log(HHI) * Presidential	& 0.03	& -0.03	& 0.09	& 0.09	\\
680	+		& (0.04)	& (0.04)	& (0.07)	& (0.08)	\\
681	+	log(HHI)	& -0.05	& -0.05	& -0.13	& -0.13	\\
682	+		& (0.04)	& (0.04)	& (0.08)	& (0.08)	\\
683	+	Presidential	& 0.40	& 0.40	& 0.76	& 0.76	\\
684	+		& (0.34)	& (0.34)	& (0.59)	& (0.66)	\\

Benefit of Git/Github: Tracking who/how/when

- You can check how the results change when we try different specification
- Easy to track which part of the results changed

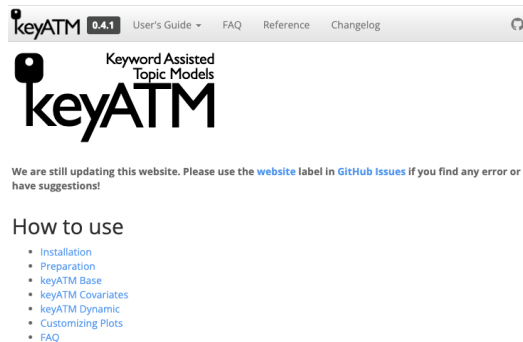


The image shows a screenshot of a regression results table, likely from a software package like Stata or R, with Git diff highlights. The table has columns for coefficients, standard errors in parentheses, and p-values in brackets. The rows are numbered 699 to 704 and 679 to 684. The highlights indicate changes between versions: red for deletions and green for additions. The table is divided into two sections by a horizontal line.

Line	Symbol	Variable	Coef	SE	t-stat	p-value	Other
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704	-		(0.03)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.14)	\\
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680	+		(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	\\
681	+	log(HHI)	-0.05	-0.05	-0.13	-0.13	\\
682	+		(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.08)	\\
683	+	Presidential	0.40	0.40	0.76	0.76	\\
684	+		(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.59)	(0.66)	\\

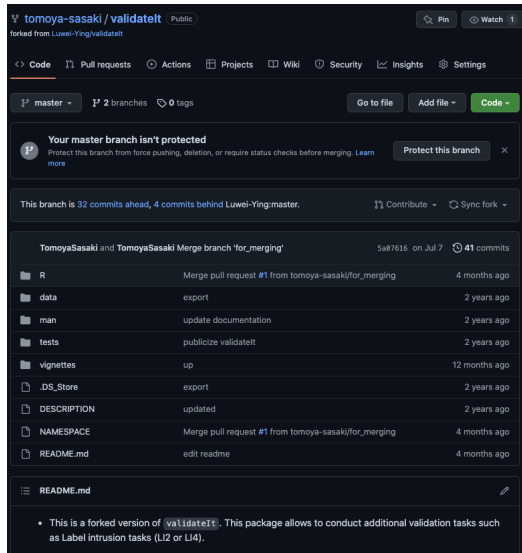
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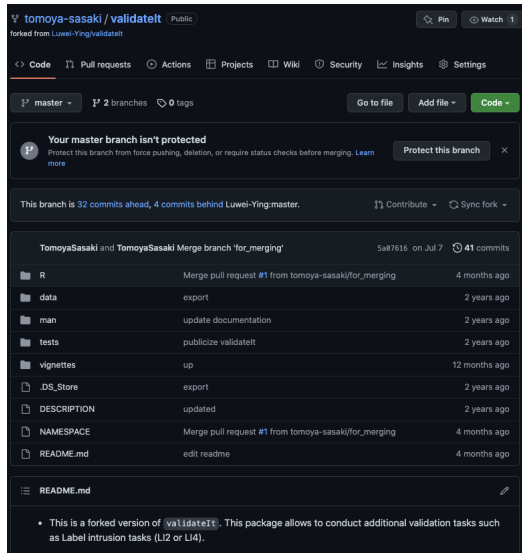
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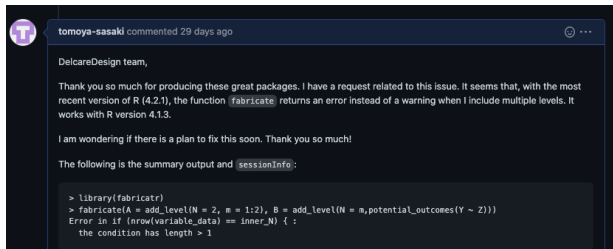
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- Send a request to package developer (often happens at “Issue”)
- Nice integration with popular apps/websites such as RStudio and Overleaf

Download



Source



PDF

Actions



Copy Project



Word Count

Sync



Dropbox



Git



GitHub

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*.csv # ignore csv files
/data/ # ignore any file in data folder
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```
- Include huge files as well as sensitive files that contain password, API key etc in `.gitignore`

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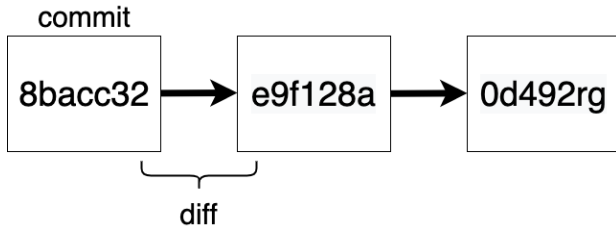
Limitations: not great if you want to track non-text files

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- Note that Git still tracks changes
- The value of Git/Github is limited
- In the right example, Git/Github recognizes the changes as the changes in file sizes
→ even though you update a figure in PDF or PNG format, Git/Github might not recognize it unless the file size changes...



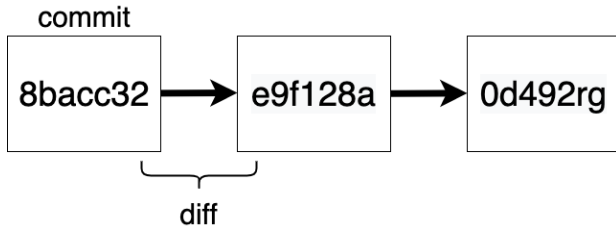
How Git tracks files

- Git tracks changes in files with “**commit**”



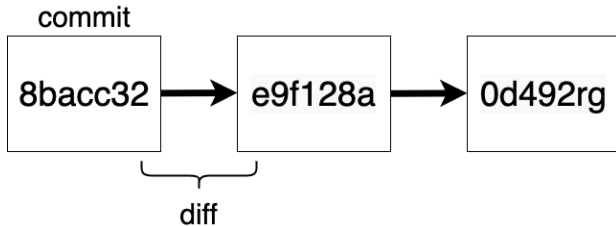
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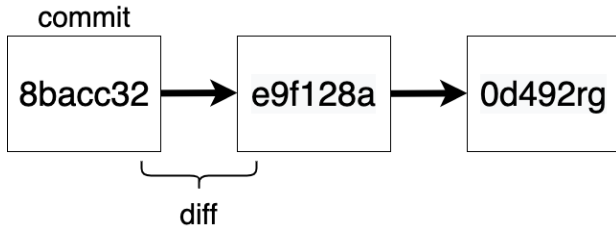
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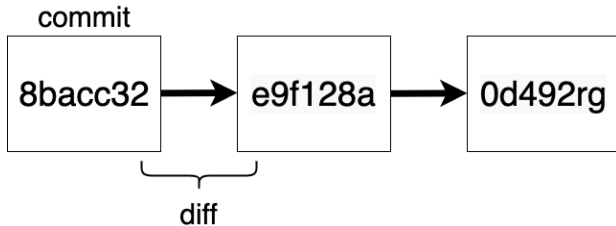
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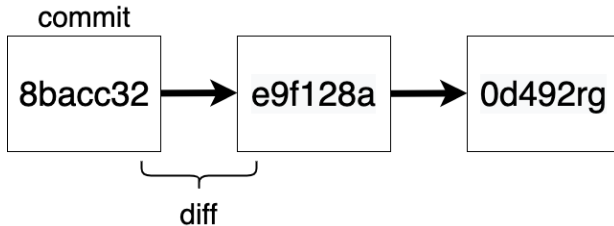
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- Commit has a human-readable message and an (first few characters of) commit ID



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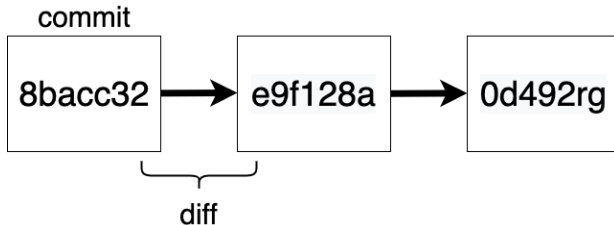
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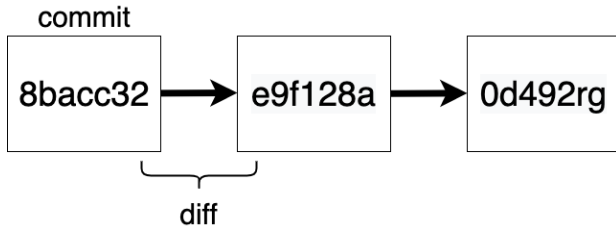
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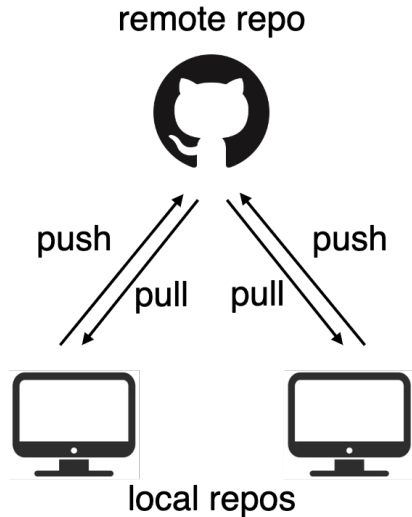
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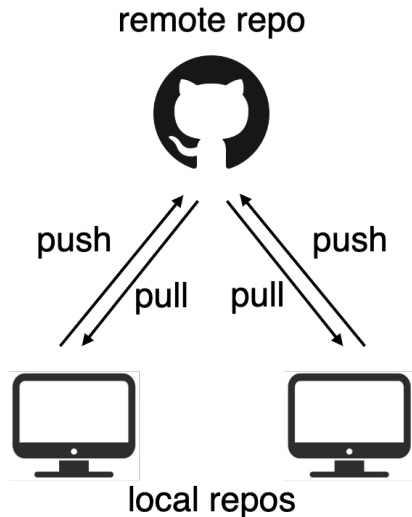
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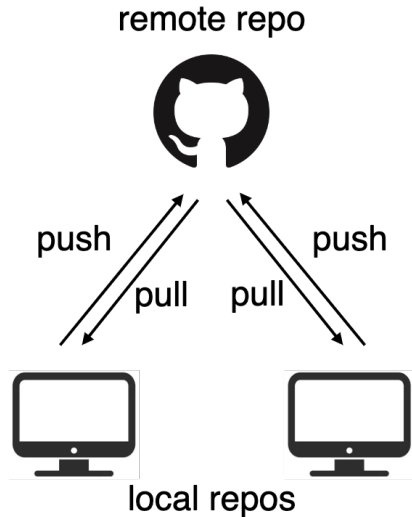
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- Technically “pull” does **fetch** and **merge**



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- If you have any existing project that you want to track with Git, create a remote repo on Github, clone it to your computer (i.e., local repo), and move codes and folders into the local repo

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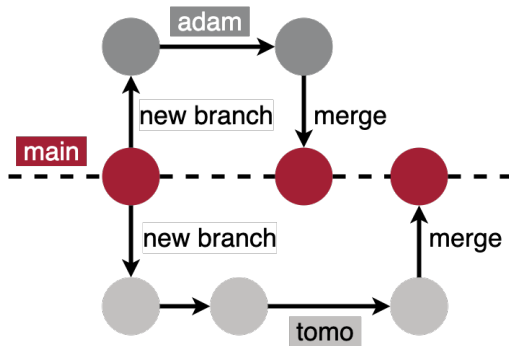
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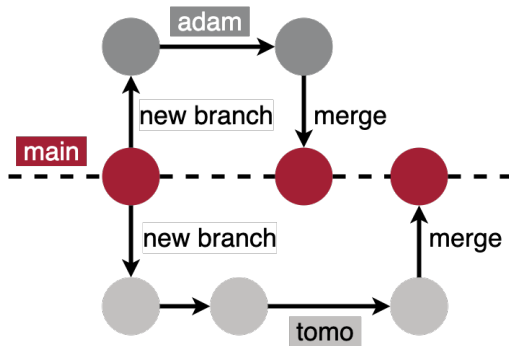
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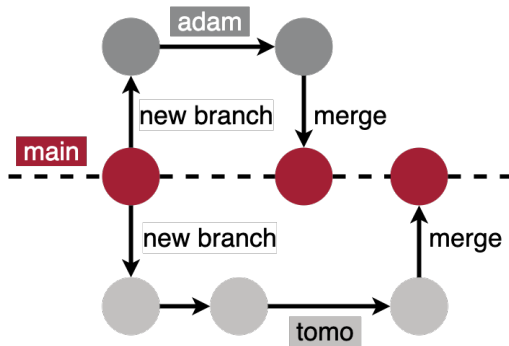
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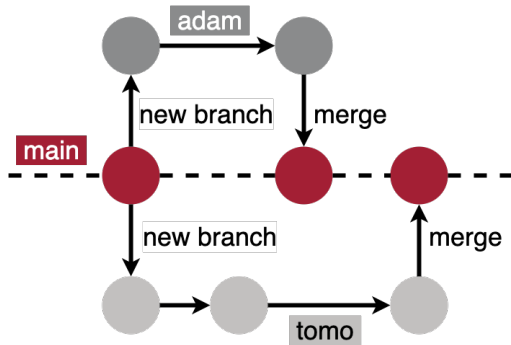
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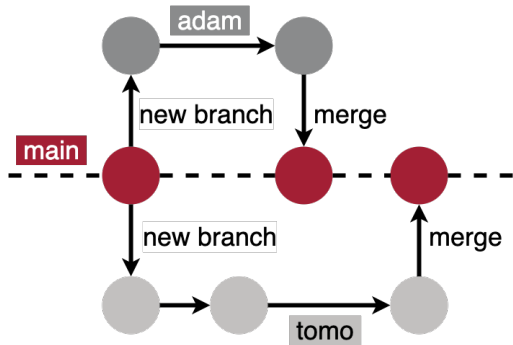
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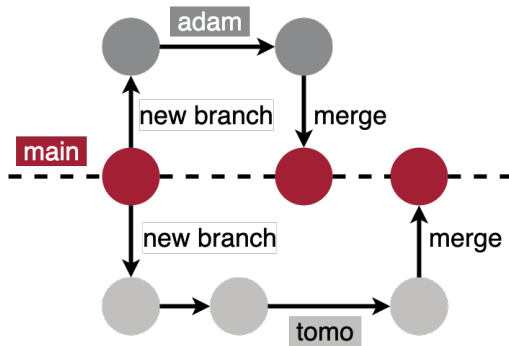
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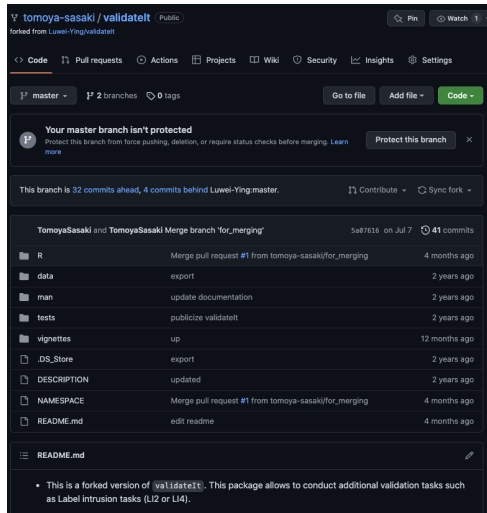
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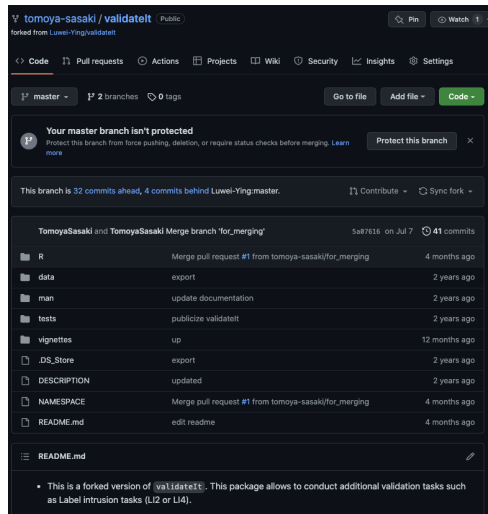
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- In my setup, I put Git repos in Dropbox but sync them only with my main computer and the same Git repos in my other computers are located in non-Dropbox folders

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- (Gradually) Learning how to use git in command lines

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- You can fix them easily by reverting

Useful resources

- Happy Git and GitHub for the useR: <https://happygitwithr.com/index.html>
- Git Guide: <https://github.com/git-guides>
- git-vs-dropbox: <https://michaelstepner.com/blog/git-vs-dropbox/>